

Rochester
Public Library

You are the library.



The library is the



community.

Annual Report to the Community 2022

Message from the Director

At the end of 2021, the RPL staff and Board of Trustees acknowledged that it wasn't a great time to revise our strategic plan because RPL, like most organizations at the time, was still struggling to emerge from the pandemic. Instead of fully revising the plan, we elected to extend it to 2024 under the overall theme of "Re-Engage, Re-Focus, and Re-Imagine." RPL operated under that theme for most of 2021 and 2022, all the while focusing on our priorities of



About mid-way through 2022, something remarkable started happening. YOU came back! If our theme in 2021 was Re-engaging, our 2022 theme became Emergence. The library and community came out into the light and began participating, visiting, and communicating with one another. Our performance metrics surged and came close to meeting pre-pandemic measures. Rochester, you showed up and reclaimed your library space. We are thrilled to have you back.



Patricia Uttaro
Library Director

2022 Review

Performance Measures

Metric	2022	2021	Difference	% Difference
Annual Visits	644,528	472,090	172,438	37%
Number of Programs Offered	2,724	1,091	1,633	150%
Program Attendance	50,572	36,575	13,997	38%
Total Materials Borrowed	1,180,382	824,271	356,111	43%
Reference Questions	116,995	105,822	11,173	11%

Fun Facts About RPL

Most Borrowed Items for 2022

Raising a Reader bags: borrowed 15,921 times
The *Dogman* series by Dav Pilkey borrowed 6,872 times

Most Unusual Items Loaned

Sewing machines
Fishing poles
Seeds
Mifis
Dulcimers
Record players

Longest Serving RPL Employees 44 years each

Florence Morris
Kathy Wolf
Stephanie Penns

Oldest Item in the Collection

Histoire genealogique de la maison de Harcovrt, enrichie d'un grand nombre d'armoiries, alliances by La Roque, Gilles André de, sieur de La Lontière, published in 1662

Single Most Borrowed item

Contact – DVD borrowed 500 times

Fun Things We Did in 2022

Helped People Stay Connected



The library's **MiFi loan program** provided at-home internet access to thousands of community members. These devices were borrowed more than 3,000 times in 2022. Community members have told us how the devices helped them to apply for jobs as soon as they

were posted online, kept them connected to family members all over the world, provided internet access for people working from home, and helped students do their schoolwork.



The Outreach Department began loaning **Memory Care Kits**, a collection of life enrichment resources designed to benefit community members living with Alzheimer's Disease

and Alzheimer's Disease Related Dementias (AD/ADRD) and their care partners. In collaboration with Lifespan Rochester, staff worked to develop a high-interest collection featuring companion dolls and pets; fidget and sensory activities; games and puzzles; and reminiscence and conversation starters. Their selections were guided by input provided by social and case workers at Lifespan who work closely with adults living with AD/ADRD. The collection was developed with funds provided by the Friends and Foundation of Rochester Public Library and the Rochester Regional Library Council through the Harold Hacker Advancement of Libraries Grant.



Updated our Fit

2022 was a year of dusting off, fixing up, and rebuilding. Two major projects were realized at the Central Library: the Rundel North Terrace officially opened and the famous Secret Room in the Children's Center got a major uplift.



The Rundel North Terrace was rebuilt as part of the City's Roc the Riverway plan. This space was closed for many years due to deteriorating steel and concrete supports beneath the surface. The Rundel Building sits on stilts above the old Rochester subway and the Johnson Seymour Raceway, part of the original Erie Canal, so the design of the terrace incorporated aspects of both. You will find

a beautiful sculpture, The Oculus, by artist Andy Dufford at the corner of Broad Street and South Avenue, which welcomes people into the terrace. On that sculpture and throughout the terrace space, you will find references to many important pieces of Rochester history. This is a respite in the middle of downtown where people sit, relax and enjoy the sounds of the Genesee River.

The Secret Room, a favorite memory of many a Rochesterian, was renovated in 2022 into a joyful, playful space for children and families. You will have to find the Secret Room for yourself,



but once you're in, enjoy creative play with the little ones in your life. You'll find interactive video games that encourage critical thinking and movement, tactile materials such as giant

bricks to build with, and sometimes a quiet space to retreat from the active public space in the bustling Children's Center.

Upped Our Reading Game

Creating and sharing a culture of reading is an important



part of the RPL mission and is exemplified in the work happening at the **Arnett Branch**. Branch Manager Bruce Tehan peddled Books By Bike to the Westside Farmers' Market every week during the season, distributing free books and other goodies to anyone who stopped to chat. Arnett also distributes free books to children

throughout the year generously donated by the 1st Tuesday Book Club and provided by Hipocampo Books. We know the importance of having books in the home and the staff at the Arnett Branch does an exemplary job of getting those books into the hands of children and families.

Evanna DiSalvo and her staff at the **Frederick Douglass Community Library** work daily with young children just



beginning to explore the wonder of books and reading. In early 2022, toddler Caleb began visiting Douglass regularly. When he first started to visit, a book only held his attention for the first 3 or 4 pages. Now he listens for the entire book - sometimes twice! Several months later, two-year-old Caleb came to visit after a long absence. He enjoyed exploring the library and finding his favorite books again.

Engaged with Our Community

The Local History & Genealogy Division at the Central Library led an extensive recruitment and selection process to identify members for a community advisory board that will guide the development of a community-curated Archive of Black History & Culture. This is part of a larger effort to document, preserve, and improve access to local Black history collections. The library received 43 applications for 10 paid positions, a testament to the interest and support from the community. The final group brought diverse perspectives, experiences, and community connections to the project. The Community Advisory Board developed a mission, vision, and strategic plan for the Archive in 2023.

A decades-long effort to document, preserve, and share local LGBTQIA+ history culminated in the transfer of the **Shoulders to Stand On** project to the Central Library in July 2022. Designated by the program's founder, Evelyn Bailey, as the permanent repository for collections from individuals and community-based organizations, the Central Library's Local History & Genealogy Division became one of the largest archives of LGBTQIA+ history in New York State. When Bailey learned she had terminal cancer in March 2021, she asked the division to take oversight of ongoing and future documentation and archival collection projects and arranged to transfer Shoulders to Stand On to the library to continue the important work she began long ago.

Played Around

The library's commitment to play as a critical part of learning permeated many of the program offerings at all RPL locations. Play improves the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children, teens and adults! Through play, we learn about the world and ourselves through skill-building and experiencing joy.



Mr. Matthew at the **Monroe Branch** has his face painted at one of the many playful events there.



Arnett Branch developed a clever mini-golf game at the Westside Farmers' Market using used books. Thanks to the Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library, that makeshift golf game has been replaced with a portable putting green!

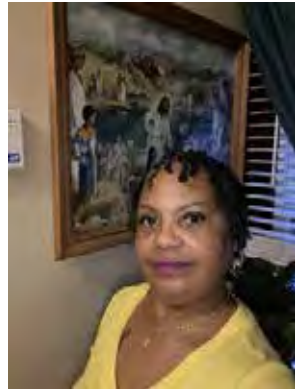
The **Digital Media Lab** at the Central Library established an e-sports program for teens, who formed the Central



Library Liberators team. The team plays on the Twitch platform under the supervision of Digital Media Specialist Jeff Bostic.

Celebrated Staff

It is not unusual for RPL employees to work for the library for decades. These three staff members have worked for RPL for 44 years each and we are so grateful for their contributions to our community.



Stephanie Penns is a Library Circulation Specialist who has worked for RPL since she was 19 years old. Stephanie is well known for her generous

and empathetic approach to delivering service to library patrons. She recently provided a pair of reading glasses for an older customer who was having difficulty reading the newspaper. Over the years, she has gifted everything from boots to a microwave to patrons in need. Central Library serves all kinds of people who have very different needs. Stephanie develops relationships with people based on kindness and understanding, above all, she treats everyone with dignity and respect.



Kathy Wolf worked at the Central Library for many years before becoming the Branch Manager at the Winton Library. She is also a children's

librarian who says her Rhyme Time program is the most meaningful and rewarding part of her job. She gathers children and parents each week, making connections and singing together. As Kathy leads the group week after week, she sees the children grow and enjoy the routine. Some children will ask to sit on Kathy's lap and do the motions to the fingerplay or bounce song. Kathy has created a community where she sees children and parents bonding with one another. One adult even invited all the families from Rhyme Time to their child's birthday party. Kathy finds this activity to be joyful and beneficial to staff, parents, and children.



Flo Morris is a Library Assistant in the Science, Health & Technology Division at the Central Library. Working in the magnificent Rundel Building is one of Flo's favorite things about being

in the library. Flo's first library job was in the Reynolds Audio Visual Department, where she worked with 16mm films, booking them for individuals, schools, and organizations. Flo often helped patrons searching microfilm of the older Rochester newspapers. This led to a day when she received a phone call from a woman in Syracuse who was looking for articles about her father, a lacrosse player in Rochester during the 1930s. Flo researched the topic and mailed the results to the patron. This is one of the most special things that has happened to Flo while working for RPL, as she became friends with the woman making the call. Flo traveled to the Onondaga Reservation near Syracuse to meet the woman and her family, and they have remained close friends.

Financials

Statement of Financial Position

	2022	2021
Assets		
Cash	\$1,191,995	\$1,240,397
Contributions and receivables	\$9,643,599	\$8,701,745
Long-term assets (investments)	\$2,874,219	\$3,319,408
TOTAL ASSETS	\$13,709,813	\$13,261,550
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Total current liabilities	\$9,697,896	\$7,192,445
NET ASSETS		
Without Donor Restrictions	\$798,404	\$2,340,069
With Donor Restrictions	\$3,213,513	\$3,729,036
Total net assets	\$4,011,917	\$6,069,105
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$13,709,813	\$13,261,550

Statement of Activities

	2022	2021
Support and Revenue		
Contributions and grants	\$17,359,816	\$20,550,406
In-kind support	\$4,264,270	\$4,264,270
Fines and fees	\$156,545	\$278,064
Investment income	(\$353,104)	\$920,120
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$21,427,527	\$26,012,860
Expenses		
Operating expenses	\$20,760,297	\$19,934,991
Transfer to City of Rochester (capital/facility)	\$2,724,418	\$4,328,943
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$23,484,715	\$24,263,934
<i>Change in net assets</i>	<i>(\$2,057,188)</i>	<i>\$1,748,926</i>
Net assets - beginning of year	\$6,069,105	\$4,320,179
Net assets - end of year	\$4,011,917	\$6,069,105

The Rochester Public Library is funded by the City of Rochester and County of Monroe.

The City of Rochester provides funding for the 10 neighborhood branch libraries and for capital projects in the Branches and at Central.

Monroe County provides operational funding for the Central Library.



The Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library raises funds, presents programs, supports special spaces and projects, and purchases supplemental materials.



More Than You Think

Rochester Public Library



**CENTRAL LIBRARY
OF ROCHESTER &
MONROE COUNTY**
428-7300
115 South Avenue



LYELL BRANCH
428-8218
956 Lyell Avenue



ARNETT BRANCH
428-8214
310 Arnett Boulevard



**MAPLEWOOD
COMMUNITY LIBRARY**
428-8220
1111 Dewey Avenue



CHARLOTTE BRANCH
428-8216
3557 Lake Avenue



MONROE BRANCH
428-8202
809 Monroe Avenue



**FREDERICK DOUGLASS
COMMUNITY LIBRARY**
428-8206
971 South Avenue



SULLY BRANCH
428-8208
530 Webster Avenue



**LINCOLN BRANCH &
TOY LIBRARY**
428-8210
851 Joseph Avenue



**PHILLIS WHEATLEY
COMMUNITY LIBRARY**
428-8212
33 Dr. Samuel McCree Way



WINTON BRANCH
428-8204
611 Winton Road North

RPL Board of Trustees

The RPL Board of Trustees is appointed by the Mayor and approved through City Council. 2022 Trustees include:

Donna Benjamin, President; Richard Hamilton, Vice President; Daniel Karin, Treasurer; Katherine Baynes, Ellen Brenner, Carolee Conklin, Alinda Drury, Glenn Gardner, Sharon Salluzzo, Erick Stephens

Reynolds Library Board of Directors 2022

The Reynolds Library Board of Directors remained intact when the Reynolds Library merged with the Rochester Public Library in 1908.

The Reynolds Board meets twice a year and manages an endowment that supports innovation at the Central Library. 2022 Directors include:

Katherine Parsons, President; Sharon Salluzzo, Secretary; Kathryn Nixon, Treasurer; Jeremy Cooney, Elizabeth Gilbert, Bruce Marché, Kathleen Miller, Justin Stevens, Patricia Uttaro, Peter Willsea, Robert Wittman

RPL Administration 2022

Patricia Uttaro, Director, Monroe County Library System and the Rochester Public Library; Brie Harrison, Manager of Library Finance; Melanie Lewis, Deputy Director of Community Services; Jennifer Smathers, Associate Director for Central Library; Ana Suro, Manager of Library Administration

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