

# Annual Report

## 2023-2024





Helen Rigdon, *Library Director.*

## Dear Library Friends,

The Sioux City Public Library is an integral part of the Sioux City community, and the Library is fortunate to work with so many **community partners** who help us achieve our mission. This past year, staff worked with Goodwill of the Great Plains, the Sioux City Art Center, Buffalo Alice, The Expansion Center, Iowa PBS, KWT - Siouxland Public Media, Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, Siouxland Center for Active Generations, Friends of the Sioux City Public Library, the Sioux City Public Library Foundation, and Book People, just to name a few.

The Library continues to provide new and improved services for the Sioux City community, including **Book Club Kits** designed for local book clubs to check out, **Playaways** that allow you to plug in headphones and instantly begin listening to a good book, **Wonderbooks** that read the story aloud to kids as they flip through the pages, monthly **interactive Spanish and baby storytimes**, and the **First Fifty Pages podcast** which features interviews with bestselling authors.

This past December, the Library completed the **Internet for All Program**, which was funded by the Federal Commission’s Emergency Connectivity Fund through 2023. This program emphasized the great need in our community for affordable access to home Internet. Due to the FCC’s funding coming to an end, Library staff worked to find new funding sources to continue supplying connectivity for a portion of the devices for checkout to the residents of Sioux City through 2024.

For information on the continued success of both the Youth and Adult Summer Reading Programs, please see this annual report.

Overall, the year was marked by **vibrant programming**, **increased community engagement**, and a **continued commitment to fostering a love of reading and learning in Sioux City.**

*Helen Rigdon*  
**Sioux City Public Library Director**

## Board of Trustees

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**The Sioux City Public Library welcomes all people and provides equitable access to all resources and services.**

- Adopted by the Board of Trustees, January 2023

# Sioux City Public Library

## by the Numbers

2023-2024



**256,879** (+8%)  
Total Visitors

Aalfs Downtown: **174,002** (+14.5%)  
Morningside Branch: **60,171**  
Perry Creek Branch: **22,706**



That's  
**881 items**  
per day!

eMagazine Checkouts **+318%**  
Kanopy Films Streamed **+105%**

**321,857** (+2.9%)  
Total Items Checked Out



**924**  
Electronic  
Device  
Checkouts

**3,390**  
New Library  
Cards  
Issued



**21,419**

Active Library Cards

21% of Sioux City residents have active library cards based on 17,710 active resident/owner cards.

**38%** of total checkouts are eResources  
(+26% increase in eResource checkouts)

eBooks (+12%) • eAudiobooks (+21%) • Songs Streamed (+31%)

**149,571**

Total Number  
of Physical Items  
& Recordings



8,977 Physical Items Added  
16,263 Items Withdrawn or Damaged  
156,860 eBooks & eAudiobooks Held



**13,625**

(+8%)

People Attended  
a Library Event

**524**

Programs/Events

**18,676**  
Computer Lab  
Logins

Computer  
Logins at  
Morningside  
have doubled  
since FY22

**100,950**

Wifi Logins (+4%)

**72,920**  
Website  
Visitors



**\$2,919,844.59**

Money saved by patrons in FY24

The Library tracked dollar amounts patrons saved by borrowing vs. buying. This does NOT include eResources, databases, or use of Library computers, equipment, & spaces.

**57,810** Database Sessions (+14.5%)

**7,091.5**

Hours of Service at  
**3 Locations**



**2,656.25**

Volunteer Hours

**1,382** (+6%)

Meeting Room  
Bookings

**4,950**

Meeting Room  
Attendees

## BUDGET SUMMARY

Operating Budget (not audited)

**\$3,363,014** City Adjusted Budget amount

### Expenditures

\$2,628,213 Personnel  
\$253,386 Materials  
\$481,415 Building/Operations/Equipment

### Revenue

\$47,585 Fines/Fees Collected

### Gifts & Grants Received

\$71,094.52 Library Foundation Endowment  
\$6,151.33 Gleeson Book Fund Distribution  
\$42,560.00 Friends of the Sioux City Public Library  
\$19,051.18 State of Iowa Funds  
\$1179.00 Other

# Growing Together

Online, on-air, at community events, in partnerships with other organizations; wherever Sioux Cityans were, the Sioux City Public Library worked to be there.

## Program Partners

Sioux City Public Library worked to grow this year by identifying ways to connect with the Sioux City Community. **Programming and event partnerships were essential** to that plan. In FY24 the Library hosted programs with Goodwill for bi-monthly Career Cruiser events, the Sioux City Art Center sewing sessions for Amanda Browder's installation, Sioux City Explorers for Youth Summer Reading, and PBS for Iconic Iowa Photo Exhibit event, the City of Sioux City, Buffalo Alice for our popular Trivia Nights, Sioux City Public Museum, Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, The Orpheum Theatre, The Expansion Center, WIT, Siouxland Center for Active Generations, and many others.

Sioux City also **attended outreach events** with Sioux City Parks & Rec, Pride SUX, Art Splash, Gallery in the Sky, The Multicultural Fair, and others.

## On-Air Partners

### *The First Fifty Pages*

The Library partnered with *Siouxland Public Media* to host authors on the podcast *The First Fifty Pages*. Library hosts Jenn Delperdang (Circulation Services Manager) and Kelsey Patterson (Morningside Branch Supervisor) featured six authors on podcast episodes in FY24. Notable authors who spoke with our Librarians included: **Erik Larson, Kate DiCamillo, Kristin Hannah, Ruth Ware, Katherine Center, and Jeneva Rose.**

### *Check it Out*

*Check It Out* is a weekly spotlight on literature and book culture that *Siouxland Public Media* co-produces with the Sioux City Public Library. Library staff share books they love with radio listeners. **42 new segments** aired in the 2023-2024 year.

**1,187**  
in-person  
participants  
at events for  
adults in 2024



Katherine Center.



Kristin Hannah.



Attendees view photos at PBS's Iconic Iowa Photo event.



The Goodwill Career Cruiser helps find employment.

# Sioux City Reads



The Sioux City Reads community mural at the Aalfs Downtown Library.

In FY24, Sioux City Public Library held its 2nd **Sioux City Reads** season. Sioux City Reads is a community-based reading initiative where Sioux Cityans were involved in every step – from book selection, to programming and book discussions.

In November, Library **patrons voted** to select the 2024 Sioux City Reads title. Voters chose ***Take What You Need* by Idra Novey**. This book served as the inspiration for reading lists, events, discussions, and online content for February and March 2024.

Events held included book discussions, a community mural painting event, sewing sessions with Amanda Browder for her art installation, family history collage craft days, a trivia night, and virtual author talks with Idra Novey.

**Over 300 people participated in Sioux City Reads events and activities.**



Over 50 people participated in creating a mural for Sioux City Reads.



A family participates in a Library sewing sessions for Amanda Browder's *Razzle Dazzle* art installation at the Sioux City Art Center.

## Open Book Club

Sioux City Public Library hosts *Open Book Club* the first Monday of each month at two locations, and a virtual Zoom session on the following Wednesday. These lively discussions averaged **14 participants each month** in FY24. The *Open Book Club* also participates in a special event for the *All Iowa Reads* initiative.

## Home Delivery Services

Library volunteers served 33 patrons and gave **64.25 hours of home delivery service** in FY24.

## Social Media & Live Streaming

**6,225** (+3%)  
Facebook Followers

**1,051** (+5%)  
Instagram Followers

**72,920**  
Website Visits

As part of our active social media presence, Sioux City Public Library produces weekly Facebook LIVE *Reference Roundtable* events. In FY24, **50 live streaming events** were held. Library staff and viewers explored books, history, live trivia, and what patrons are checking out.



Comments from Facebook:

*"I love that the Library is for everyone! Thank you for your tireless work for Sioux City!"*

*"My favorite thing I did this year was get a Library Card."*

# Full of Fun All Year Round!

## Special Events

Sioux City Public Library hosts special events to keep kids engaged with the Library and books all year. Events such as First Saturday Storytimes, Baby Storytimes, story walks, Storytime en Español, Crafternoons, Fall Fest, movie events, Bridge to Reading, Innovation Studio, and others. From August 2023 - May 2024, **50 special events were held** with **964 children and 592 adults participating.**

## Visiting Groups

Sioux City Public Library works with local schools, child care programs, and learning centers to provide staff and resources for any area group who wishes to visit the Library. In FY24 **349 kids and 39 adults toured the Library with a group.**

## 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

Research shows that reading to your child before they enter school is the most reliable predictor of school success. The **1,000 Books Before Kindergarten** program encourages parents to read to their kids frequently. In FY24, **270 new readers were enrolled and 31,250 books were recorded.**



The Library partnered with the 501st Legion to bring a special surprise during the *First Saturday Family Storytime: May the Fourth Be With You* event.



During October, ghosts haunted the Juvenile Fiction section.

## Storytimes

The Library held over **101 storytimes** at our Library locations with **1,158 children and 876 adults in attendance.** Outside the Library, **over 2,200 children heard stories, songs and rhymes** when youth staff presented **134 storytimes at 20 Sioux City preschool classrooms.** The Library also delivered book boxes curated by staff to eight classrooms in Sioux City.

# 134

Outreach Storytimes

*While working at the Circulation desk at the Main library I overheard a child say, "I love the library." His mom said, "I do too."*

– submitted by Library Staff

Summer Reading

# Youth Summer Reading

The Sioux City Public Library's Youth Services department worked hard to ensure kids of all ages enjoyed 2024 Summer Reading. **1,651 children & teens grew their minds over the summer by participating in the Summer Reading program at the Library.** Participants on Beanstack read 436,946 minutes this summer, an increase of 36% from the 2023 Summer Reading season!

All Summer Reading events and activities were free and open to the public. **1,857 kids & teens and 1,060 adults attended Library Summer Reading Events with 373 attendees joining the Library for the Summer Reading Kickoff event at the Aalfs Downtown Library.** Kickoff participants enjoyed crafts, a dance party, and photo opportunities with our partners, the Sioux City Explorers!

**Kids & teens attended 58 events during Summer Reading** which included Read-to-Me-Dogs events, Storytimes, LEGO builds, Family Yoga, Toddler Summer Games, Free Movie Fridays, Smokey Bear's Birthday Party with Sioux City Fire & Rescue, the Blank Park Zoomobile, Teen After-Hours events, Teen Crafternoons, Imagination Builders, Innovation Studio sessions, and a visit from Illusionist Keith West to discover the magic of books!

**436,946**  
(+36%)

Minutes read by Sioux City Public Library Summer Reading Participants!



(Above) Kickoff attendees take photos with Slider, the Sioux City Explorers mascot. (Below) Children two and under enjoyed a special storytime.



Windows at all Library locations were painted to celebrate Summer Reading. The above windows at Aalfs Downtown Library provided an interactive photo opportunity for Library visitors to capture memories.



Innovation Studio attendees participated in STEM challenges. Above, kids test out a handmade boat during a boyanity challenge.

**"My little guy had a great time. He especially enjoyed the dance party. Thank you for helping get him excited about reading!"**  
- patron comment about Summer Reading Kickoff

# 2,917

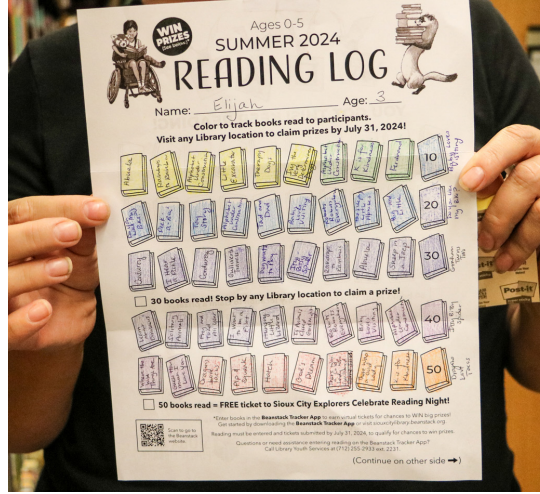
Youth Summer Reading event attendees

# 1,651

Kids & teens participated in the Summer Reading Program

# 5,425

Beanstack badges earned



An impressive reading log that was turned in by Summer Reading participant, Elijah.



Imagination Builders, ages 6-8, listen to a story.



Therapy dogs were comforting listeners for hundreds of kids at *Read-to-Me-Dogs* events at AalFs Downtown Library.



The Library partnered with the Sioux City Explorers. Players attended the Kickoff, and a special Explorers game night was offered as a reward for youth who met Summer Reading goals.



Over 50 teens participated in the *Teen After-Hours: Mystery at Camp Harmony Hollow* event.



(Above) Illusionist Keith West delighted hundreds of magic lovers with his illusions. (Right) An animal ambassador from Blank Park Zoo helped kids learn about the natural world. (Below) Attendees found lots to do at the Youth Summer Reading Kickoff event!



*A patron stated that attending the Family Yoga event led by Brenda was a catalyst for her and her two young daughters to create new healthy habits. After attending the session held as an event during the Summer Reading Program, the family checked out a book about yoga for kids and read it at night before bed. Even when on vacation and enjoying a hot chocolate the children were reminded of their yoga breathing while blowing on their warm drink like in the book they checked out from the Library.*  
- submitted by Adrienne, Youth Services Manager



# Adult Summer Reading

**392**  
event attendees

**2,325**  
badges earned

Sioux City Public Library's *Adult Summer Reading Program* followed the same timeline as the Youth Summer Reading Program and also used the *Beanstack Tracker App*.

The Library held a Trivia Night kickoff event with **over 100 attendees** in partnership with a local business, Buffalo Alice. Participants could win books from the Summer Reading book list and learn more about Adult Summer Reading.

Throughout June & July the Library held events in partnership with the Audubon Society, creators of the Common Ground documentary, The Expansion Center, and an owl experience with the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. **392 people attended Adult Summer Reading events.**

Over the course of summer, **307 adults signed up on the Beanstack Tracker App and earned 2,325 badges.** Participants could earn badges by reading, visiting a Library location, reading a book from the Summer Reading book list, downloading an eBook on Libby, or checking out different Library media.

(Above and right) The Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center gave an educational presentation on owls for all ages.



Reader Services Librarian Michael talks about Adult Summer Reading during a Library press conference.

Book reviews left by patrons on titles from Adult Summer Reading book list:

*"I had picked this title pretty randomly from the Library list to start my summer reading and I am so happy I did! I recently finished reading "The Parable of the Sower" by Octavia E. Butler, and I must say, it is a captivating and thought-provoking read.... The themes of survival, community, and resilience are beautifully woven into the narrative, leaving a lasting impact on the reader. ...I highly recommend this book to anyone looking for a compelling and meaningful read."*  
- Noel H. on *Parable of the Sower*

*"Of the five summer reading titles I finished this summer, this was my favorite! The alternate history was very interesting, and I also loved that it was set in the Midwest. ...I've already recommended this book to a friend."*  
- Ivy P. on *Cahokia Jazz*

*"Move over horse girls, it's bear girl season" - Amber B. on Eight Bears: Mythic Past and Imperiled Future*



## New at the Library



Book Club in a Bag kits were added as a new Library collection this year.

The Library welcomes change to meet the needs of the Sioux City community. Several new programs and collections were implemented to meet the needs of patrons and to attract new users to the Library.



Youth create electromagnets using the Library's STEM Maker Cart during an Innovation Studio event.

In FY24, the Sioux City Public Library applied and was **chosen to receive a STEM Scale Up award** from the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council. A STEM Maker Cart was provided along with training for staff. This award gave the Library the resources needed to hold **20 STEM programs with 135 children and 68 adults attending**. A second STEM Cart was donated to the Library for daily patron use by the Deb and Jeff Hansen Foundation.



The Library implemented **two new monthly storytime programs**: Storytime en Español and Baby Storytime to better meet the specific needs of these groups.

(Left) Baby Storytime is a place to hear stories, sing songs, play, and learn.

*A patron came up to the desk with his son and checked out the Playaway book **Charlotte's Web**, he was very excited about it. A short time later, his other son came up to the desk to check out his own Playaway book. The patron said he listens to audiobooks and his first son wanted to listen to **Charlotte's Web** since they had watched the movie. The father inspired the boys by example and hopefully the family will continue to read/listen/visit the Library together for many years to come!*

– submitted by Library Staff

**Three new collections** were added to the Library's array of resources: Wonderbooks and Playaways (with over 700 checkouts in 8 months), plus Book Club in a Bag kits.

**Wonderbooks** are picture books for children that read the story for you! Every Wonderbook is a print book with a ready-to-play audiobook inside.



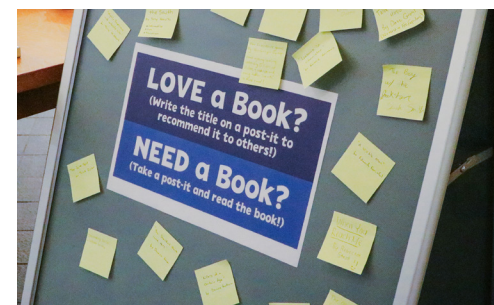
**Playaways** are individual devices with pre-loaded audiobooks that give patrons the portability and freedom to take audiobooks anywhere.

**Book Club in a Bag** kits contain six copies of a book so book clubs or groups of friends can all read and discuss the same book.



Thought was given on how to make a visual impact and add fun in Library spaces. New interactive and creative displays were introduced throughout the year. A lighted book tree, shelf talkers, window murals, interactive sticky note displays, scavenger hunts, and book walks were used to enhance Library features.

(Above) The book tree at the Downtown Library.  
(Right) The Love a Book, Need a Book display encouraged patrons to leave a recommendation or take a sticky note from the board to find a new book.



## Connectivity Impact

The Sioux City Public Library received more than \$1 million in funds from the Emergency Connectivity Fund. With this funding, the Library launched the *Internet for All* initiative, a program that made 2,000 internet-enabled devices available to individuals and community organizations for checkout through the Sioux City Public Library during 2023.

As the program drew to a close, the Library asked those who received devices to fill out surveys to determine the impact of the program:

**76%** of respondents said *Internet for All* helped them have internet at home.

**28%** said it helped them access healthcare.

**28%** said it helped with schoolwork.

**29%** said it allowed them to search for employment.

**54%** said it improved the quality of life.

**47%** used it to pay bills online.

**57%** used it to connect with friends and family.



Federal funding for the devices ended in 2023, but due to the need the Library saw for access to these devices, the decision was made to use Foundation and State Library funding

to continue to provide **100 internet-enabled hotspots** for six-week checkouts to Library patrons. Devices have been in high-demand since inception.

Comments from IFA surveys:

*"This program was instrumental in helping me navigate through school and I am proud to say that I am now a nurse! Thank you!"*

*"I appreciate that they had this available. This was the first time I had internet in my home. Thank you!"*

*"This was an amazing service! I won't have internet again because I can't afford it, but it was helpful to have while the funding lasted. I was so much more connected to others, and I am thankful for that!"*

*"I have my granddaughter over a lot, and she was able to do homework at my house 3-4 days a week. Thank you so much!"*

*"Thank you so much for the use of the Chromebook and hotspot. We very much appreciated it. We are retired and on a fixed income."*

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*"Thank you very much for including the Siouxland Center for Active Generations in your Internet for All program. With the devices you loaned us we were able to teach several hands-on technology classes to help our senior members increase their computer and tablet skills ...Our members greatly appreciated using the devices loaned to us from the Sioux City Public Library; it was a wonderful opportunity to address the digital divide experienced by many senior citizens in our community."*

- letter from Siouxland Center for Active Generations to the Library

*“Dear Library staff, I would imagine that times are challenging for the Library with book challenges and culture war issues invading your workplace. Please know that you are appreciated. As a patron I can always find a wonderful selection of books and resources, a kind smile, and a welcoming atmosphere. The Library is a safe place and an important institution in a good society. Thank you for all you do for our community.”*

- Your patron and ally, Jonathan



## **SIOUX CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

### **Aalfs Downtown Library**

*529 Pierce Street · Sioux City, IA 51101*

712-255-2933

Monday - Wednesday.....9 am - 8 pm

Thursday - Saturday.....9 am - 5 pm

Sunday (Sept - May).....1 pm - 5 pm

Sunday (June - Aug).....Closed

### **Morningside Branch Library**

*4005 Morningside Avenue · Sioux City, IA 51106*

712-255-2924

Monday - Wednesday.....10 am - 6 pm

Thursday - Friday.....10 am - 5 pm

Saturday.....9 am - 5 pm

### **Perry Creek Branch Library**

*2912 Hamilton Blvd. #101 · Sioux City, IA 51104*

712-255-2926

Monday - Friday.....10:30 am - 5:30 pm

## **SiouxCityLibrary.org**

Access Library catalog & databases.

Download eBooks & eAudiobooks.

Stream movies & music.

Request titles & renew checked out items.