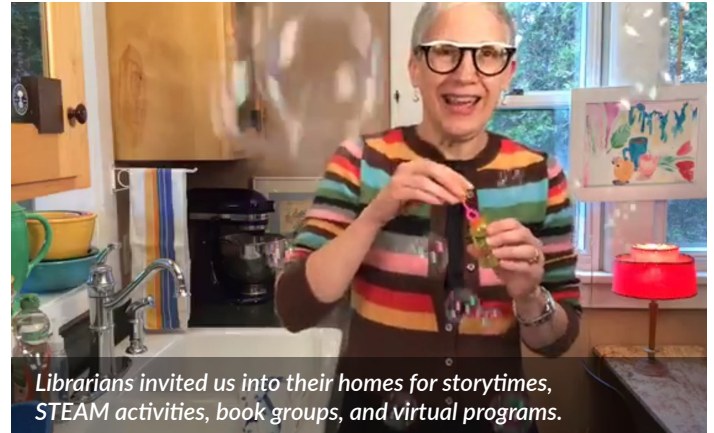


A YEAR IN REVIEW



StoryWalks® launched in April 2021, delighting patrons of all ages on the Library lawn and at parks and schools around town.



Librarians invited us into their homes for storytimes, STEAM activities, book groups, and virtual programs.

1000 Books Before Kindergarten encourages and supports early literacy and results in lifelong benefits!



Curbside Collect enabled patrons to access physical materials even when the building was closed.



Annual reports typically state and evaluate performance based on standard industry metrics—those familiar visitor, circulation, attendance, program, and resource metrics. We share some of that information here and are proud to report that the Library again earned a national three-star award ranking from Library Journal in January 2021, based, in part, on those metrics.

This year, however, we are measuring our success a little differently. The FY2021 performance review reveals a Library that did more than just survive. The Library thrived during a year like none we have ever experienced, discovering new and meaningful ways to connect with its community.

Although the physical building was closed for the month of May 2020 and the level of physical access to the Library fluctuated from June 2020 through June 2021 due to COVID, our commitment to deliver the highest level of library services to the Lake Forest community, however, never wavered.

Despite the significant disruption to operations, these highlights reflect a Library committed to its mission:

- ▶ Signature events, such as *Read Between the Ravines* and *Lake Forest Reads* were held, continuing and supporting community conversations around the opioid crisis, mental health, systemic racism, and immigration.
- ▶ *1000 Books Before Kindergarten*, STEAM programs, summer and winter reading programs, and other youth literacy projects were launched or enhanced.
- ▶ The Young Adult Advisory Board completed its diversity audit of the Young Adult/Teen collection and remained connected through virtual programming.

Equally as important, the Library continued to move forward significant operational projects, including the migration to Office 365, development and installation of the beta self-check option, migration to fiber internet, release of the RFID RFP, and preliminary work to update the phone system. These steps continue to position the Library to deliver library services more effectively.

Whether it was:

- ▶ handing out books and other materials on the back dock,
- ▶ delivering materials to homes,
- ▶ answering reference and reader's advisory questions by phone, email, text, chat, social media, and in-person around town,
- ▶ adding remote access to databases and hundreds of copies of eBooks,
- ▶ reimagining the Library's website as a resource for accurate and up-to-date COVID information and easier access to Library news,
- ▶ leveraging the Library's social media channels to amplify messages from other community organizations,
- ▶ developing homeschooling and entertainment resource guides during the stay-at-home orders,
- ▶ hosting 24/7 Wi-Fi in the courtyards and parking lot,
- ▶ making it easier to get a library card by issuing and renewing cards online,

Although there seems to be little precedent, you've done the hard research to create a safe and effective library, while also creating a fun and educational online set of programs for the community. Hats off to you!

—Patron, August 2020

- ▶ delivering high quality virtual programming and providing grab-and-go kits to enhance the experience of a virtual program, or
- ▶ creating personalized reading care packages and lists—

the Library proved it was so much more than a building.

Throughout it all, what kept the Library and its staff looking forward to better times was you—our patrons, our community—and how rewarding it was to find new and creative ways to connect, innovate solutions that addressed your needs, and provide support and resources to help you and your families adjust to a new way of life.

We are proud of what we accomplished with you this year and look forward to seeing you in the Library.

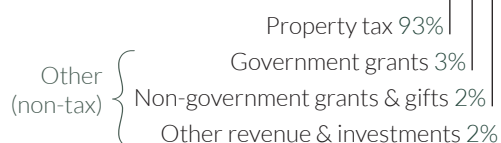


Catherine A. Lemmer

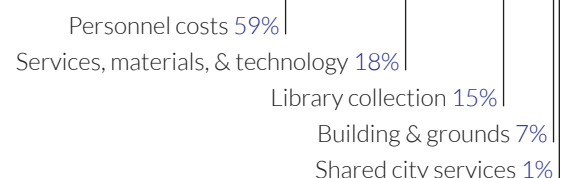
Catherine A. Lemmer, Executive Director
(Photographed with Head of Circulation Tori Sergel, passing out materials during Curbside Collect in June 2020.)

FY2021 FINANCIALS

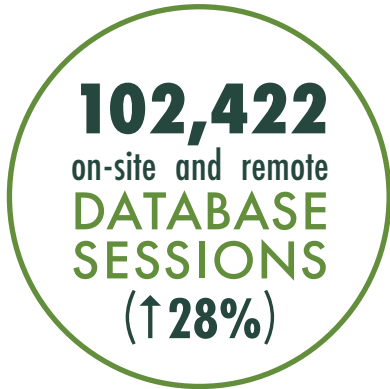
Revenue Total
\$4,562,396



Expense Total
\$3,708,468



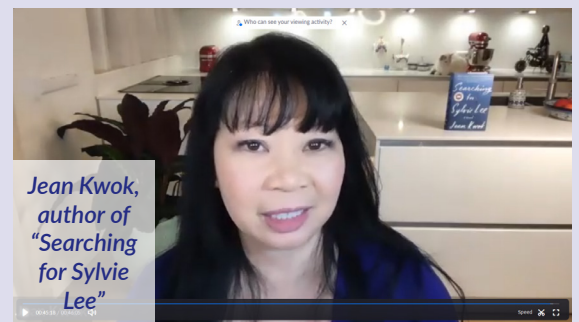
LIBRARY USAGE & HIGHLIGHTS



- 2,821 grab-and-go activity or storytime kits provided for children, teens, and adults
- 1,642 online chats between librarians and patrons
- 65,945 digital resources including eBooks, movies, and more borrowed and streamed (↑32% over last year)
- 134 care packages and email lists of “Just For You” recommendations created for 85 patrons
- 80,195 website users viewed 737,777 pages (↑20%)
- 1600 views of 60 videos on the Library’s YouTube channel

MEET THE AUTHOR EVENTS

on Zoom and Facebook Live were a resounding success. To date, the live events and recordings for the three authors below have accrued more than 2840 views.



As a neighbor to the beautiful Lake Forest Library, I wanted to reach out and applaud your Board’s work in innovating the space for its next 100 years. A project of this scope is both necessary and important to the city and the multi-generational patrons of the Library.

–Patron, August 2020

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT ADVANCES

- ▶ Installed the inaugural board of The Lake Forest Library Foundation, enabling a dedicated group of volunteers to begin the philanthropic efforts around the project.
- ▶ Created an extensive CIP section with project details and progress at www.lakeforestlibrary.org/imagine.
- ▶ Delivered presentations to City Council.
- ▶ Developed an email newsletter to share engagement opportunities.
- ▶ Hosted five public listening sessions to delve deeper into the community’s hopes and desires for Lake Forest Library now and into the future.

MOMENTS OF GRATITUDE

Bravo!! Bravo!! Wonderful presentation and lecture!! Thank you very much and please pass out thanks to the presenter—very well done! We so enjoy the virtual offerings in the areas of history, art, music, etc., from the library, especially at night after work when we attend. Please keep them coming!

–Patron, October 2020

The Bundle Up Bingo Winter Reading Program was so much fun, and the timing of it was great. I've done many reading contests at the library (summer, blind date with a book, etc.), but this one was the best. I loved getting out of my reading genre comfort zone and trying many different types of books. And the winter activities were a great way to get people outside.

–Patron, January 2021

I have much more respect for children now. The little ones wore their masks without complaint and they tugged at my heart with their little smiles that I could only see in their eyes. But I could see how happy they were to be back in the Library along with their caregivers who told me many times how thankful they were that we were available throughout the year.

–Library Staff, April 2021

Each week we get our curbside pick-up of children's books. Lorie always selects 10–12 perfect picture books for my children to peruse throughout the week. Thank you to staff for keeping us entertained and engaged during this pandemic!

–Patron, October 2020

My kids and I just really wanted to reach out and give you a big thanks for your wonderful Free Virtual Activities page on the library website because it provided us with so much to do while stuck at home! Since their school went fully remote, we're always looking for fun and educational ways to curb boredom and keep our spirits up ... Thanks so much for helping with this!!

–Patron, January 2021

Great additional book challenges on the Adult READsquared bingo board, with different race, disability, LGBTQ authors.

–Patron, June 2021

One of our trustees brainstormed the slogan: "Under the Dome or Safe at Home, We are Here for You." I come back to that refrain often as a reminder of who we are and what we do. I have never been more grateful to be a part of the Lake Forest Library community.

–Library Staff, April 2021

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS & SUPPORTERS



Gifts to Lake Forest Library

Friends of Lake Forest Library program grant	\$74,000
Reed Family Foundation, Inc.	
Peter S. Reed, grantee	\$10,000
Helen S. Reed, grantee	\$10,000
L. Keith Reed, grantee	\$1,000
Leslie V. and John S. Reed, Jr., grantee	\$600
The Buchanan Family Foundation	\$10,000
The Dick Family Foundation	\$3,000
Family and Friends, <i>in memory of Steve Kennedy</i>	\$1,500
Lake Forest Book Review	\$1,000
Meredith & James Hayes, <i>in memory of Anthony & Bernadine Cascarano</i>	\$250
Benjamin Bartram	\$200
Kaye & Theodore Grabbe, <i>in memory of Nancy Sergel</i>	\$200
Mary F. Grumhaus and David D. Grumhaus Fund	\$200
WOW Book Club, <i>in memory of Dick Lewis</i>	\$140
Kaye & Theodore Grabbe, <i>in memory of Joseph Alaimo</i>	\$100
Barbara B. Reidy	\$75
Deanna & Todd Frank, <i>in memory of Bernadine Rose Cascarano</i>	\$50
Veda Kaufman Levin	\$25
Margaret Tomaselli	<i>Fra Noi</i> subscription



Gifts to The Lake Forest Library Foundation

Barrett Erker & Taber Smith	\$1,236
Heidi Virginia & James Paul Clifton	\$1,000
Hedberg Foundation, Inc., <i>in honor of Carla Westcott</i>	\$500
Lisa Burton Radzely	\$118



Looking ahead to another year of innovative, responsive, concierge library services for the community we love!