REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

2024



WOOD LIBRARY CANANDAIGUA, NY

A Message from the Executive Director



What We Stand to Lose

"Libraries will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries."

This quote adorns my office wall at Wood Library, a daily reminder of what's at stake in our current moment.

Today, libraries face a perfect storm of challenges. Federal funding cuts to libraries threaten literacy initiatives, technology access, and professional development across the nation. The New York State Library received \$8.1 million in annual federal funding from the Institute of Museum and

Library Services (IMLS) for everything from administering library construction aid to digital literacy programs that directly benefit community libraries and the people we serve.

As the director of Wood Library, I've witnessed the profound ways our community relies on us—ways that transcend the impressive statistics in this report (83,994 visitors, 169,681 items checked out, 26,302 program attendees last year).

Consider the widow who comes to the library to email documents and finds a listening ear. Or, a child experiencing their first story time. And, the job seeker using our computers who later returns to tell us they got the job. These moments of personal connection and triumph happen every day at Wood Library. They're not counted in our budget or tracked in our statistics, but they're arguably our most valuable service.

With the elimination of IMLS, I fear that it's not just grant programs that will vanish—it's the valuable opportunities for connection that libraries like ours provide in a world that increasingly lacks them.

Simultaneously, libraries are experiencing unprecedented attempts to remove books from our shelves. These challenges mostly target works exploring diverse perspectives and historically marginalized voices precisely the books that help us understand one another better.

When funding disappears and books are removed, it's not just services and materials that vanish—it's a commitment to intellectual freedom and equal access to information. It's the promise that everyone, regardless of background or resources, deserves the opportunity to read, learn, and decide for themselves.

Help us preserve these opportunities. Sign a petition. Contact your representatives. Share your library stories with others. Most importantly, visit Wood Library and bring others in the community with you. We appreciate everyone who donates and supports Wood Library. It is a special and essential place because of you.

In a time when so much divides us, community libraries remain one of the few places where everyone is welcome, regardless of background or beliefs. That's worth protecting, don't you think?

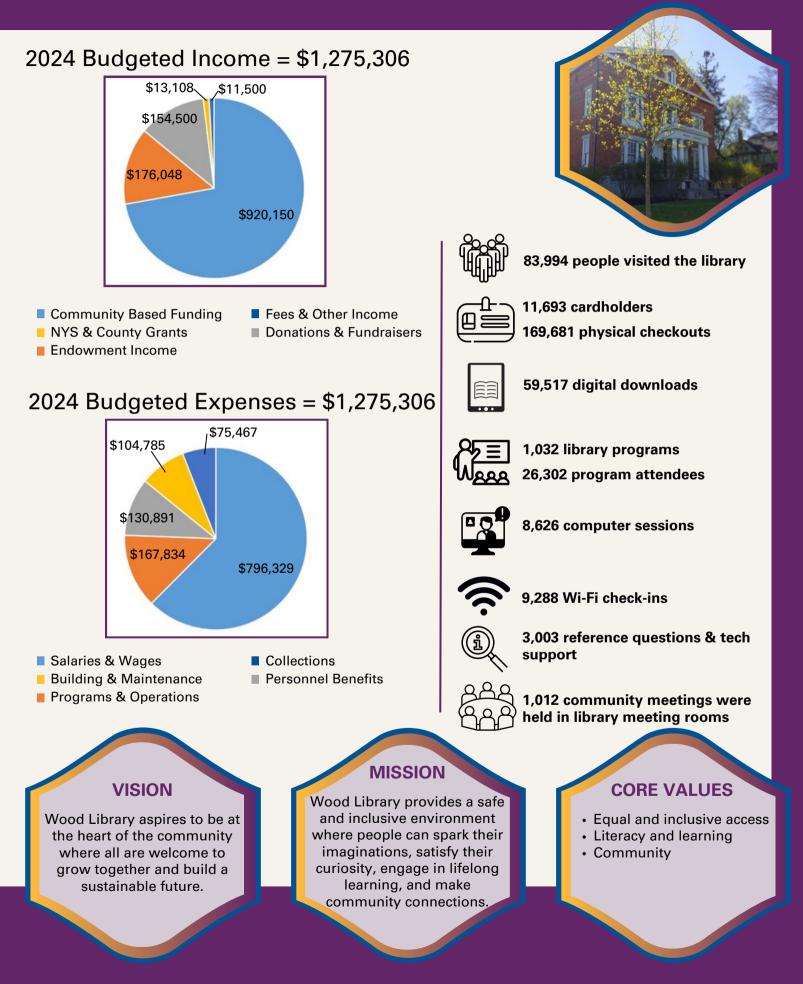
-Executive Director Jenny Goodemote



Library Hours:

Mon-Thurs 9 AM-9 PM Friday 9 AM-6 PM Saturday 10 AM-5 PM Sunday 1-4 PM

Wood Library by the Numbers 2024



Highlights and New Initiatives 2024

Free Farm

Little Free Farm Stand

A place to share fresh produce, cut flowers, and starter plants! All items are donated by local gardeners. Funded by ROCtheDay donations.

Website Update

An updated website was launched, showcasing library services and programming and improving the patron experience.

New Children's Services Librarian

Longtime Children's Services Librarian Mary Ferris retired, and Rachel Brill was hired to continue the tradition of quality children's programming families love.

Library Mini Golf

Close to 400 people played mini golf in the library and raised \$18,450 for library programs and services.

Pursapalooza

This popular fundraiser drew 120 people to the library who purchased countless purses and jewelry totaling \$19,402.

True Crime Expo

True crime enthusiasts gathered for a full day of crime talks featuring local experts, journalists, and authors.

New Adirondack Chairs

Grab a book or hang out with friends in our new Adirondack chairs thanks to the Lundy Garden Fund.

Reading Garden

Construction started on the reading garden and RM Landscaping was named the general contractor for the project.

Sensory Kits

A visual timer, ear defender headphones, fidgets, blackout tent, sensory panels, wiggle cushions, and portable study carrels were made available for patron use. Funded by Library Giving Day donations

Black History Month Display

Canandaigua resident Connie Fredericks-Malone curated a unique Cream of Wheat cereal exhibit featuring Chef Rastus and discussed the collection.

Summer Intern

The Rochester Regional Library Council funded a grad school student to assist the librarians with special projects over the summer.

Eco Ed Programs

Vermicomposting, bugs, bats, and birds were the topics of programs made possible with the Earth Day Grant by the Genesee Finger Lakes Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association.

Calming Spaces

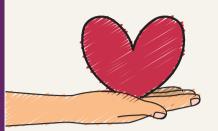
Cushions, play mats, comfy chairs, and toys were added to library spaces with funding by the RRLC Harold Hacker Grant.

Adult Art Programs

Weaving, illustration with pen and ink, and plein air painting programs were funded by a NYS Council on the Arts Finger Lakes Community Arts Grant.

Volunteers

Kathy Panara is the new Volunteer Coordinator!



"I've had a life-long addiction, affinity, and passion for books and reading. When it came time to include volunteerism in my life, the library was a natural choice. A very pleasant and helpful staff make it easy to be at Wood." - Marcia Minges

This year at Wood Library, our volunteer team has been nothing short of extraordinary. With a dedicated group of 27 individuals from all walks of life—including retirees, individuals of different abilities, National Honor Society contenders, and community supporters—we've seen firsthand how powerful community spirit can be. Their time, talents, and energy have made it possible for the library to operate efficiently and stay within our budget, all while expanding the welcoming, inclusive environment we're known for.

Our volunteers have helped with everything from shelving and program prep to tech support and event assistance, all contributing to the library's success. More importantly, they've brought warmth, enthusiasm, and a deep sense of civic pride into our space. Their presence fosters a true sense of belonging—for visitors and staff alike—and reminds us daily of the power of giving back.

"I look forward to coming to do my volunteer hours at the library. I enjoy interacting with the staff and other volunteers. It is a wonderful place that I am happy to support." - Cathy Wood

We are so grateful for every person who has chosen to share their time with us this year. Their participation not only supports our mission, but strengthens the bonds of our community. We look forward to continuing this journey together in the year ahead, building an even more vibrant and connected library for all.

2,287 Daily Volunteer
Hours Logged

"I have always loved libraries. I love volunteering at Wood Library. The staff is so welcoming and friendly. I love helping the library." - Nancy Mickiewicz

Watch for these new initiatives in 2025!

The Reading Garden at Wood Library will create new opportunities for outdoor programs, partnerships, learning, relaxation, and play. This project is funded by many generous donors, and grants from private foundations and New York State Library Construction Aid.

A mural in honor of retired Children's Services Librarian Mary Ferris will be installed around a new doorway in the Children's Room which patrons will pass through to get to the Reading Garden. The mural will feature an array of wildlife, insects, and plants. This project was funded by individual donations.

The Seed Library at Wood Library is a one-stop shop for budding gardeners. Seeds are free and donated by community members, local businesses, and seed companies. Gardening workshops are planned throughout the year as part of the Seed Library program. This project was funded by a Mary Clark Thompson Community Health Grant.

Leave a legacy. Secure Wood Library's future.

A planned gift is a simple, powerful way to support Wood Library for generations to come—at no cost to you today.

Name Wood Library as a beneficiary in your will, trust, retirement plan, or life insurance policy. Some supporters choose to give through a donor-advised fund or establish a charitable gift annuity that provides income during their lifetime.

Planned gifts qualify for membership in the Charles A. Loomis Legacy Society, which honors those who include Wood Library in their estate plans.

Learn more and let us know about your plans by contacting Maria Bucci, Director of Development, at <u>mbucci@owwl.org</u> or call 585-394-1381 ext 328.



Annual Fund Drive Donations 2024

Donations to the Annual Fund Drive support library operations not funded by the tax levy. In 2024, the levy supported just 75% of the library's operating budget. We appreciate these important donations that were received between January 1 and December 31, 2024.

We make every effort to maintain accurate donor records. Please let us know if we have made an error recording your donation.

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Making a difference—in their own words.

Behind every act of giving is a story—personal, powerful, and deeply human. Here, in their own words, donors share what inspires them to support our mission and invest in Wood Library.

Linda and Barry Jones

Linda and Barry Jones were among the very first members of *The Book Circle*—a dedicated group of library lovers who give monthly to sustain Wood Library's services and programs. When we asked what inspires their support, Linda shared this heartfelt (and humorous) message:

"'Us' is really just me, because Barry has a library phobia. We trace it back about sixty years, to when I insisted we study in the college library! He's come a long way, though—he'll now go into the library to pick up a hold for me, and he's quite skilled at returning books via the outdoor drop box. Ergo, men *can* be trained!"

Linda's love of reading started young—and with a little attic magic.

"My love of reading began when I was twelve and discovered three old books in our attic. My parents were teachers, so books were always around, but these three—treasures from my mother's childhood—were something special. It felt like finding gold in the attic! The titles? *Freckles, A Girl of the Limberlost*, and *Elsie Dinsmore*. I still reread *Freckles* from time to time. I cried and cried over those stories—and absolutely loved them."

Even today, books remain a vital part of Linda's joy and comfort.

"So now, some 75 years later, whenever I'm feeling a little low, my husband knows there are three surefire fixes: chocolate, a trip to the quilt store, and a visit to Wood Library!"

Sue and Keith Turner

As longtime library patrons, donors, and former educators, Sue and Keith Turner understand the power of literacy to unlock opportunity. That's why supporting Wood Library feels so meaningful to them.

"We love seeing children leave the library with arms full of books—that's how our own love of reading began. If a child can read, they can learn anything, and Wood Library makes that possible for every child in our community.

For the Turners, Wood Library is so much more than books. "It's a lifeline—especially for those who don't have access to technology or other services at home. From public Wi-Fi, computers, and copiers, to large-print books, audiobooks, tech help sessions, and even wellness classes like yoga and tai chi—the library is there for people in our community.

It's easy to take these resources for granted, but we don't. We're proud to support a place that lifts up our whole community."

You can make a difference for Wood Library too.

Join neighbors—like Linda and Barry, and Sue and Keith—in supporting Wood Library. Your gifts ensure that everyone in our community has access to learning, connection, and opportunity.

Friends of Wood Library are super supporters.

Super advocates. Super cheerleaders. Super supporters! That's how we like to define the Friends of Wood Library.

Friends memberships collectively fund things that are outside of the library budget but are necessary to a thriving community library. In 2024, these included summer reading prizes, summer reading t-shirts, advocacy, a music series, special events, the movie license, and the reading garden.

The Friends of Wood Library is a vital network of people who make Wood Library a special place in our community. We appreciate those who remain committed to The Friends year after year.



Honor and Memorial Gifts 2024

We wish to acknowledge these special gifts that were made in honor or in memory of friends and loved ones in 2024. These donations were used to purchase new books for the library's collection.

In memory of Janet Anderson

Maureen Farley, Donald Berens and Family Amer Hassan and Sara Sheperd Microsoft Inc Karon Morgan John Ross Bruce and Pamela Smith Carl-Erik Sundberg Janet Wild John and Linda Zappia

In memory of Dona Beaney Larry and Debora Bilodeau

In memory of Roy Beaney Larry and Debora Bilodeau

In memory of Wilhelmine Bilodeau Larry and Debora Bilodeau

In memory of Dr Brendan Brady Drinda Lofton

In Memory of Betty Comella The Centerfield Homemakers

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In memory of Kathanne Mitchell Canandaigua Travelers Club

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In memory of Dolores Placito Frederick and Barbara Bedet Margaret Marafioti

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In honor of Wood Library Employees Victoria Peltier

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VOTE TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025

Proposition for Wood Library Funding on Canandaigua City School District Ballot

What is Proposition #5?

A proposition for Wood Library funding will appear on the Canandaigua City School District ballot. It asks voters to authorize the School District to levy and collect an annual tax for Wood Library in the amount of \$1,027,564 starting with the 2025-2026 tax bill. If approved, the library property tax rate is projected to be 28 cents per thousand dollars of assessed property valuation.

Depending on where you live, vote at Canandaigua Elementary School Link Gym or the Cheshire Fire Hall between the hours of 7 am-9 pm.

Public Information Session: Thursday, May 15 6 pm at Wood Library

For more information: https://woodlibrary.org/vote/

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