

# Appleton Public Library



## OUR MISSION

Learn, know, gather,  
grow – your center  
of community life.

## OUR VISION

Where potential  
is transformed  
into reality.

## Library Trustees

NANCY SCHEUERMAN,  
PRESIDENT

MARGRET MANN,  
VICE PRESIDENT

PAT EXARHOS,  
SECRETARY

JASON BROZEK

NANETTE BUNNOW

JOHN KELLER

REBECCA KELLNER

BRIAN LOOKER

LISA NETT

KATIE VAN ZEELAND,  
ALDERPERSON

UMIKA SIVASAMY,  
TEEN REPRESENTATIVE

## Director's Message

What is a library? The definition varies from person to person.

A library is a community center and neighborhood anchor. A place to search and discover. A book warehouse. A part of the educational ecosystem. A technology center. A refuge for folks who need a safe place. An essential part of social infrastructure and a healthy democracy. A space to gather and build connections. A cornerstone of the principles of intellectual freedom. A place that reflects a community's legacy and aspirations. Where potential is transformed into reality.

Every library is unique because every community is unique. Libraries serve communities who have diverse and evolving needs through all stages of life. Everyone who walks through the library doors has a different need.

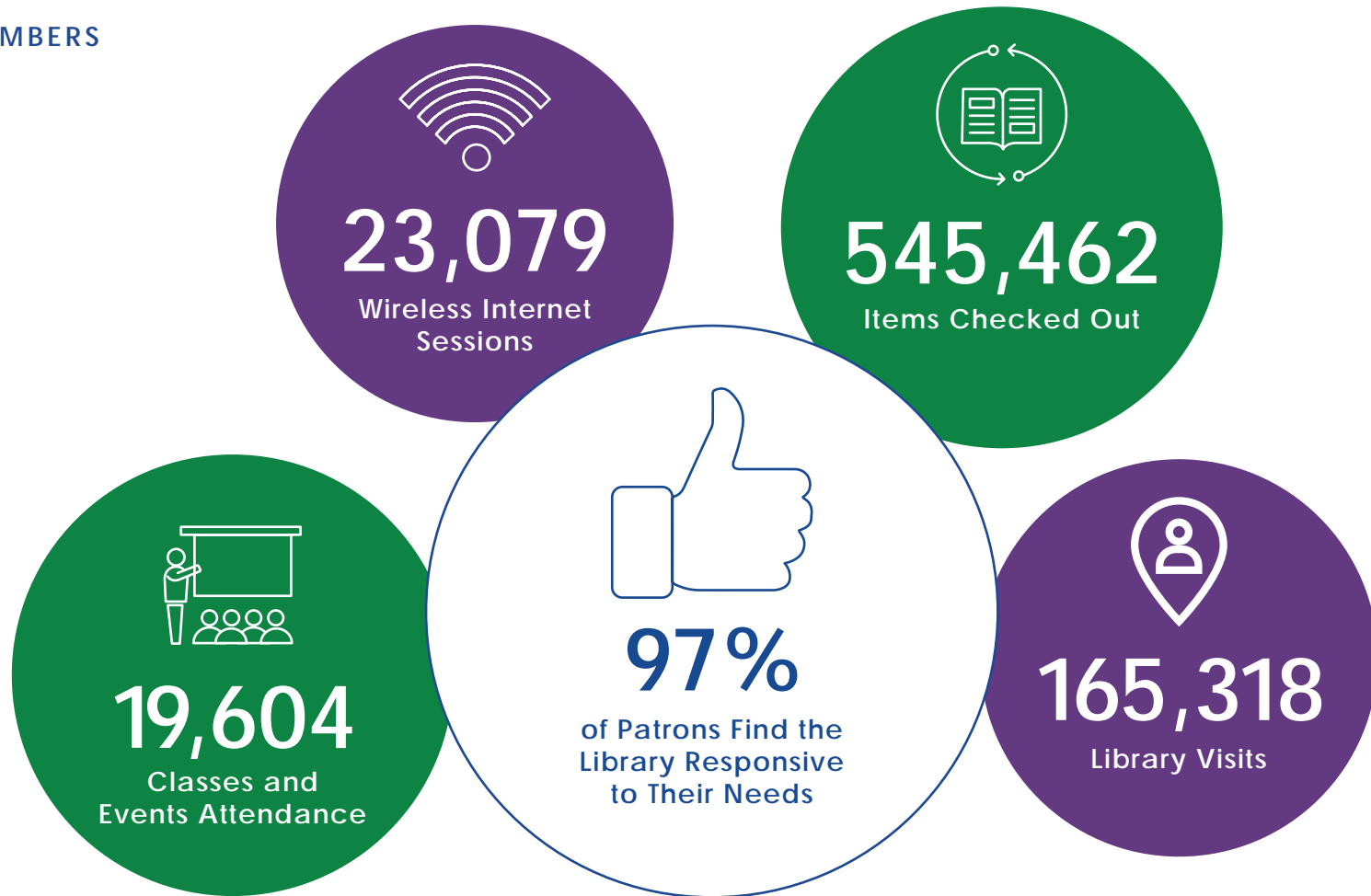
At Appleton Public Library we developed a flexible long-range strategic plan establishing a focal point as a hub of learning and literacy. The plan drives what we do and how we serve our community. It is a part of how we develop our programs, services, budget, facility planning, and even how we communicate about ourselves. As you read through our annual report you will recognize many aspects of a library from the list above and how they're connected to our strategic plan.

A library is a complex organization. That complexity is its strength. Your support and investment in library services allows us to leverage many other benefits alongside our community - making our community a better place for everyone. I hope you will join me in continuing to spread the message of what a library can do within a community.

**COLLEEN RORTVEDT,**  
LIBRARY DIRECTOR



BY THE NUMBERS



EXPENSES AND REVENUES

**\$5,027,671.00**

Program Expenses

**\$1,928,643.00**

Capital Expenses

**\$1,195,935.87**

Program Revenues

**\$104,364.00**

Grants



# friends

OF APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY

A special thank you to Friends of Appleton Public Library - who use donations and grant funds to support the library's mission. Friends' grants are essential in our ability to provide innovative and creative library programs and services.

We are grateful to have a strong partnership.

**70K**  
in Grant Funds  
received in 2022



**1.76M**  
in Grants Received  
Since 2000

**117**  
Programs and Special  
Projects Funded  
in 2022



## We support and sustain education for all ages.

### DIGITAL LITERACY

Digital literacy is a broad term which includes knowing how to use information and communication technologies. Some of the common reasons to learn and develop digital literacy skills include completing school projects and applications for college, creating resumes and applying for jobs, participating in onboarding and other work-related training and meetings, and more.

Digital literacy is a critical factor in social and economic participation, removing barriers to education and employment. We support the community's digital literacy efforts through a variety of services and programs.

One of those services is drop-in Computer Help. Community members can visit the library for help with everything from a general internet search to creating and using email. We also provide additional in-depth help with one-on-one sessions which can be scheduled in-person or virtually.

In addition to Computer Help sessions, our Job Connection program offers community members the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a staff member or volunteer to help with job searching, writing cover letters and resumes, and learning new skills with our free digital resources.

### SUMMER LIBRARY PROGRAM

Research shows children and teens who do not engage in reading activities throughout the summer are susceptible to losing an average of three months of learning achievement. This loss is cumulative from one year to the next, regardless of the quality of the school.

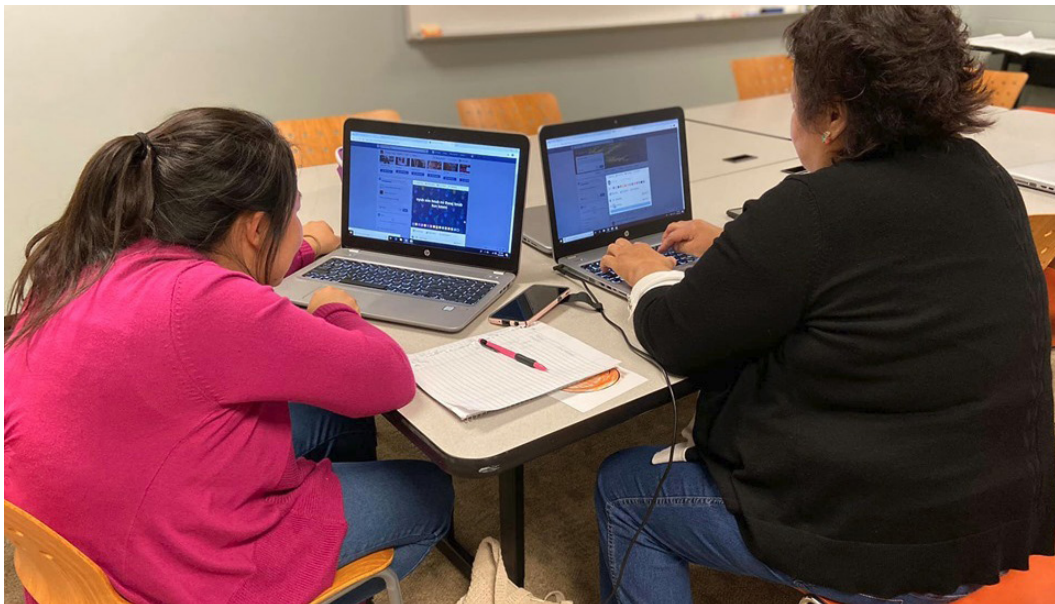
Helping support the educational needs of our community remains a critical library service. Our summer library program helped the youth in our community to fight summer learning loss by providing

easy access to books and a fun and engaging experience.

There are other important benefits to participating in summer library programs, and they're not just for children and teens. Our adult program offered lifelong learning opportunities which helps lead to a more enriching and fulfilling life.

In total, nearly 1,400 adults, teens and kids signed up for the Summer Library Program.





# 246

Job Connection and Computer Help Sessions

**“I’m not good with computers, and I didn’t know where to even begin searching and applying for a job now that everything’s online these days. This was so helpful!”**

- Toni, Registered Nurse and Job Connection Patron



# 86%

of parents surveyed reported their child maintained or increased their reading skills by participating in the Summer Library Program.



## COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT

We connect with partners to share knowledge and information.



## LIBRARY BUILDING PROJECT

During the renovation of the Oneida Street library we are operating from a temporary location. Finding a facility in the City of Appleton that is affordable, flexible, large enough and easily accessible was not an easy task. In early 2022, the Library Board of Trustees approved a lease for a temporary library location at 2411 S. Kensington Drive.

Staff spent the spring of 2022 preparing to move from an 86,000 square foot facility to a 24,000 square foot facility. Making sure library materials are accessible is a key priority. With the help of our moving company, we were able to disassemble, pack, move, and reassemble the library in a matter of weeks - offering as little disruption in service to the community as possible.

We connected with hundreds of new patrons in the first full month open at our temporary location. In addition, we welcomed back many returning patrons. Our door counter registered just over 15,000 visits and we saw over 41,000 items checked out our first month open.



In addition to offering an accessible collection, continuing programming for all ages remains a key priority. Library programs provide people of all ages with unique opportunities to learn, know, gather, and grow in community with others. They nurture a sense of belonging in the community because they foster connections between participants and facilitators, and all are welcome to join.

The temporary library space doesn't accommodate the volume and range of programming we typically host. With that in mind, we began our 2022 program planning with a focus on other City of Appleton spaces such as Scheig Center, City Center studios, city parks, and Houdini Plaza as venues for programs. We were able to expand by offering programs in places such as Thompson Center on Lourdes, Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, Goodwill, Lawrence University, UW-Oshkosh Fox Valley, AASD buildings, coffee shops, ice cream shops, and restaurants.

We are thankful for the community spaces we have been able to use over the last few months. We are also excited to return to a renovated facility that can support the community's long-term programming and service needs efficiently and effectively.

We are hopeful as we continue to move through the building project. During the last quarter of 2022, city staff, The Boldt Company and architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill worked to modify the design to reduce the scope of the plan to fit within the constraints of the economic realities. The process was rigorous and required compromises. The result will be a renovation and addition that still provides an excellent facility for the community, living up to the core objectives of the project and providing a point of civic pride for residents.

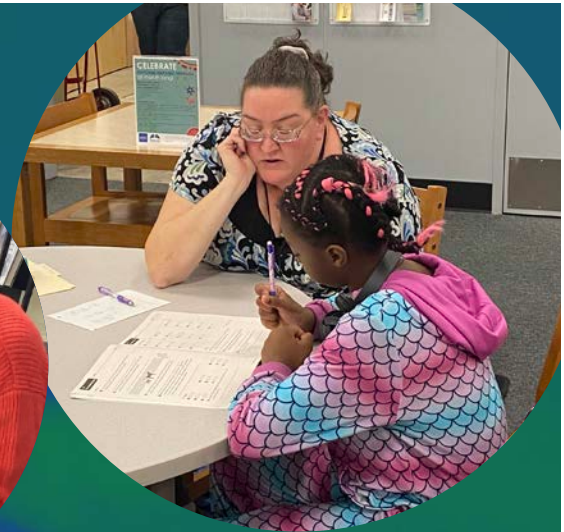
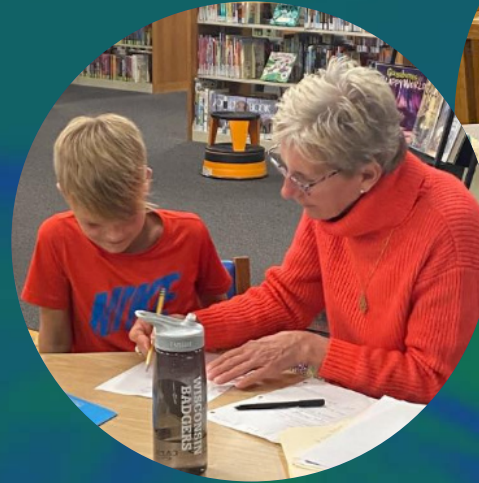


EDUCATE AND INSPIRE YOUTH

We ensure that children and teens find a supportive place for their futures.

**“This program [One-on-One Tutoring] enriches what APL provides for our community by offering a vehicle to continue assisted learning beyond the school hours, addressing specific/individualized student needs, and helping build the life-long love of learning.”**

- Sonja, School-Age Librarian



## ONE-ON-ONE TUTORING

Our School Age Librarian, Sonja, invited our Teen Librarian, Emely, to explore tutoring as a way for the library to support local students and families. Empowered Tutoring reached out and a natural partnership was born. Empowered Tutoring works through grant funding to provide adult tutors with backgrounds in education. The tutors assist students in standard academic areas, offering weekly 30-minute sessions on a semester basis.

Private tutoring can be costly. One-on-One Tutoring helps level the playing field by offering quality tutoring service to students. The program continues to expand - serving 27 students in 2021 and 65 in 2022.

“We’ve all been there, when we needed help in some way,” said Emely. “I believe that more goes into tutoring than a letter grade, it’s also about boosting confidence and hope in students.”

## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING

Programming for children and families offers enrichment activities, educational opportunities, community connections, social/emotional skill building and more.

One of our priorities is early childhood programming, where we share important early literacy skills with children and families. Through our preschool and toddler storytimes, trained library programmers teach six early literacy skills (print motivation, print awareness, letter knowledge, vocabulary, narrative skills and phonological awareness) through the five practices of talking, singing, reading, writing and playing.

We also offer specialized early childhood programs that teach music theory and basic concepts of science, technology, engineering, art and math.

When we asked caregivers what they love most about our early childhood programs, one parent responded "watching my child blossom both socially and creatively."



## COLLEGE AND CAREER PATHWAYS

Our Teen Services team developed College and Career Pathways with the goal of helping middle and high school students plan for their post-secondary future.

College and Career Pathways enhances and complements our local schools' efforts to prepare students for their futures by offering a variety of workshops and programs. Since the start of the program, offerings have included FAFSA assistance, resume development, building an online presence, job

interview training, college essay support, scholarship advice and career spotlights.

Currently, we offer a unique virtual program called "Day in the Life" where we spotlight professionals throughout the community in unique careers. This is a great way to showcase professions students might otherwise not be aware of and the distinct journey of each person in getting there - and hopefully inspire a student or two in the process.

## CREATION AND INNOVATION

We are a platform that sparks discovery, development and originality.



## SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

One of our focus areas is to serve as a connector for small business resources and information. When we match community members with critical small business information, resources, and programs, they are equipped and empowered to grow our local economy and create new jobs in the area.

Part of our small business resource offerings include database subscriptions small businesses and entrepreneurs typically can't afford, like A to Z Databases and Gale Courses. These resources help small businesses and entrepreneurs get started with important research.

We heard from business owners the need for additional help navigating the research databases. Yee, one of our Adult Services and Engagement Librarians created One-on-One Small Business Help to connect them to the research and information they need to succeed in their business.

In addition, Yee worked with ColorBold Business Association, and UW-Madison Division of Extension (Outagamie County and Winnebago County) to create an Entrepreneurs of Color Spotlight series to support and empower business owners of color in Northeastern Wisconsin.

106

Participants in the  
Entrepreneur of Color  
Series

## COMMUNITY POWERED

In 2022, Appleton was one of four communities selected to host Wisconsin Humanities' Community Powered pilot program. Wisconsin Humanities is an independent nonprofit organization affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. Wisconsin Humanities' mission is to strengthen our democracy through educational and cultural programs that build connections and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs.

The Community Powered initiative's goal is to harness the stories, histories, and strengths of communities to build community resilience. Community Powered hired Rachel, a recent college graduate with roots in our community to work as a project coordinator based at APL for one year. Rachel is employed by Wisconsin Humanities and works closely with our Community Partnerships department, with staff serving as mentors.

Over the last few months, Rachel has had numerous learning conversations and collaborated with local nonprofit organizations, businesses, and citizens to explore stories of the Appleton community. She is using those stories to create a locally meaningful project that meets the community's needs. In addition to talking with community members, conducting interviews, and attending events, she has coordinated a community asset map, a storytelling workshop and an event focusing on belonging.

"Through Community Powered, I want to harness that feeling of warmth and acceptance and use it as a spark," said Rachel. "I want to use that spark to build a burning fire that spreads throughout the people of Appleton, igniting a sense of compassion and understanding that is so hard to find in times of isolation."



Community Powered is possible thanks to a \$150,000 capacity building grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Wisconsin Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and a generous private donor. Extra support for Community Powered's library partners comes from a Department of Public Instruction ARPA grant for building libraries as a center for community resilience.

ENGAGED AND CONNECTED

We focus on  
how to make  
a difference in  
people's lives.

77

People Connected  
Through  
Tales and Travels

"We got to learn about  
new cultures and meet and  
interact with other people who  
are going through what we are."

- Tales and Travels Participant



## GENEALOGY AT THOMPSON CENTER

In the fall of 2021, the Thompson Center on Lourdes reached out to us to host an hour long genealogy session at the center. Knowing we couldn't cover the breadth of genealogy in a one-hour session, Katie, our Local History Librarian, worked with Thompson Center staff to create a series of monthly hour-long sessions focusing on a variety of genealogy topics.

Katie develops the programs from scratch each month, using her knowledge of genealogy research, genealogy books in our collection, and our electronic resources.

"Every session I try to not only tell them about how to research these records online using our library tools, but also how to do the research offline because not all are computer savvy," said Katie. "Not all genealogy research can be done online either, since so much is not digitized yet."

The genealogy sessions have created life-long learning opportunities for attendees. Additionally the sessions have helped attendees connect more deeply with themselves, their family and their heritage.

## TALES AND TRAVELS WITH FOX VALLEY MEMORY PROJECT

In early 2022 Melanie, one of our Adult Services and Engagement Librarians, created a pilot program called Tales and Travels Memories in partnership with Fox Valley Memory Project. The bi-monthly program utilized a new destination each month to explore a culture through their stories, music, art, and food with the goal of evoking memories and connections to the participants' own life experiences.

The second session of each month was led by local artist and thanatology student, Elyse-Krista Mische. Elyse-Krista worked to draw connections between memories

and discussion points made in earlier sessions, and designed projects that were adaptable to any skill level, ensuring accessibility for those experiencing memory loss and their partners. Working alongside each other allowed for a sense of independence and accomplishment, while still promoting fun and connection.

In conversations, participants noted the sense of belonging they felt. Fox Valley Memory Project found participants gained comfort with other attendees and began to join other events hosted by the organization.



## ENRICHED EXPERIENCES

We provide inclusive, timely, and community interest aligned experiences.

## GROWING ONLINE RESOURCES

There is something for everyone in our online resources. From small business and entrepreneur help to genealogy research tools to language learning services - we work to connect our community with free online resources and instruction aligned with their interests.

One area we continue to see a rise in popularity is digital material checkouts. OverDrive and Hoopla are two of our popular digital material checkout platforms. They offer access to hundreds of thousands of e-books, e-audiobooks, magazines, movies and more.

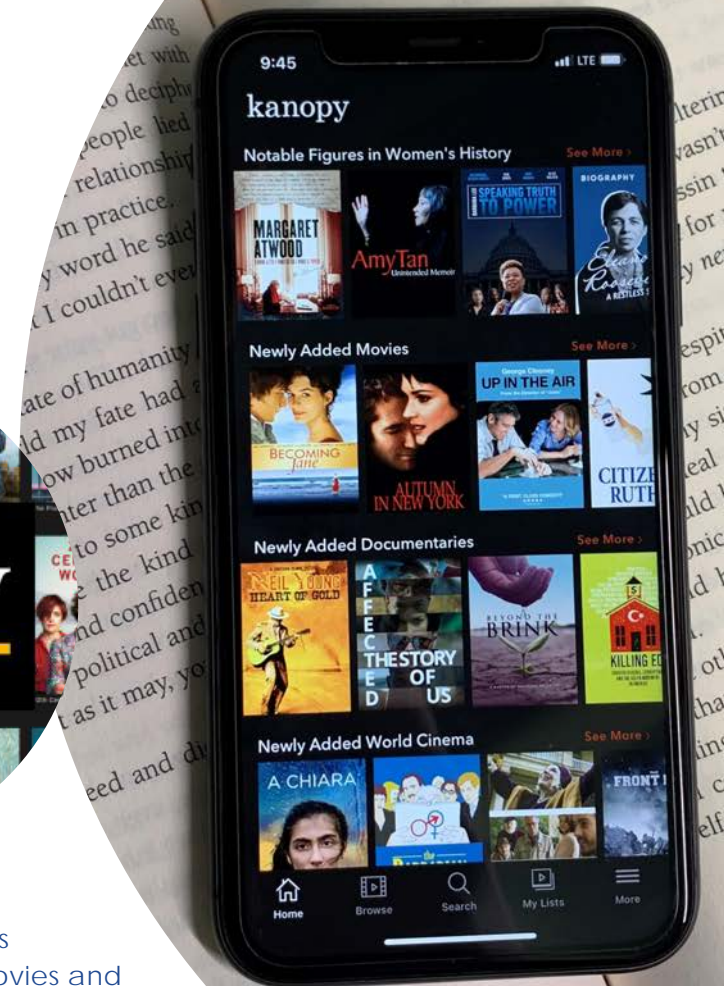
In 2022, we expanded our digital material checkout services to include a streaming

# 208K

Digital  
Checkouts



service called Kanopy. Kanopy offers thousands of critically-acclaimed movies and documentaries, award-winning foreign films and content for kids available via computer, mobile device or smart TV. In one year, patrons streamed over 2,500 shows and movies.





## ONLINE BOOK LISTS

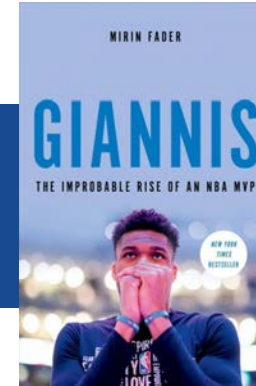
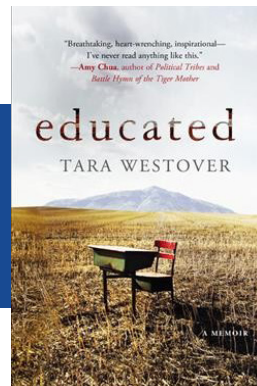
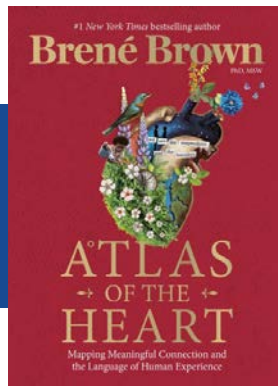
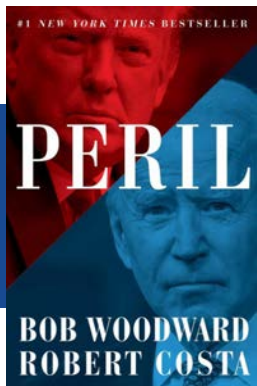
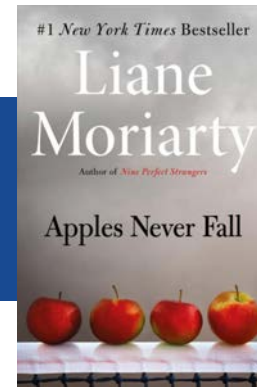
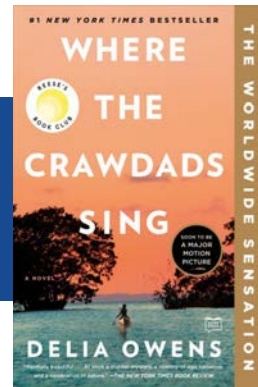
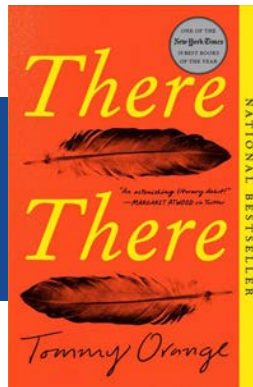
This year we focused on expanding our online book lists for our patrons. Part of our strategic plan includes fostering a love of learning and literature. By curating online booklists, we help to create a virtual gathering space for our patrons, a place where they can feel connected to other community members who share their interest in the pursuit of knowledge. This is especially important during the transition to a new library building as we do not have the same physical space in our temporary facility.

Every month Jenny, Library Assistant and Book List Coordinator, searches for compelling themes that tie in to current events. She works with staff to curate lists that lend

to the themes and topics she's researched. She then publishes and promotes them through our catalog, social media and email outlets.

"I envision our booklists as a gateway for our patrons to see all the library has to offer them as unique individuals. Therefore, my focus is to maintain a sense of variety, inclusivity, and fun when deciding on a particular topic," said Jenny. "I want our patrons to feel the library offers materials that are relevant to them both for informational and entertainment purposes. I want all patrons to feel welcomed and supported by our services."

### TOP 5 FICTION CHECK OUTS 2022



### TOP 5 NON-FICTION CHECK OUTS 2022

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL

We give our community opportunities for growth, self-instruction and inquiry.



37

Walking Books  
Patrons Served



300+

Walking Books  
Volunteer Hours

## WALKING BOOKS

Our Walking Books program began in the late 1970s by a group of library volunteers. Patrons who are not able to easily access library materials are matched with a volunteer who checks out, delivers and picks up library materials for free. With our move to a temporary location in a different area of the city, making sure library materials remain accessible is a key priority. Walking Books is one program that helps us achieve this goal.

When volunteers bring the materials to homebound patrons, they have an opportunity to talk for a while and become

better acquainted with patrons. Both patrons and volunteers enjoy their time together. It's an opportunity for two people who might be from different generations or backgrounds to get to know each other.

By delivering library materials on a regular basis we're helping our older patrons stay mentally engaged with books and media for as long as possible. Reading helps older adults with memory retention, decision-making skills, stress reduction, better sleep, and can even delay the onset of dementia.



**1,300+**

**Materials Distributed  
through Book Club in a Bag**



**115**

**Book Club in a Bag  
Orders Fulfilled**

## BOOK CLUB IN A BAG

We created Book Club in a Bag as a way to make starting a book club accessible for anyone. The program offers community members the opportunity to request a specific title, number of copies needed for their group, and their preferred format. As noted in the title of the program, materials are checked out and gathered in a handy zippered bag for easy pick up. One of our Book Club in a Bag users said she is "a heroine with her neighborhood book club", while another mentioned their "book club continues to grow."

Book Club in a Bag allows our community to gather together with a common purpose. It encourages a deeper understanding of a book, fosters great conversations, and offers a way to make new friends. All of these are important aspects of well-being as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Appleton  
Public Library

## Annual Report

2411 S. Kensington Drive  
Appleton, WI 54915  
920-832-6173  
[apl.org](http://apl.org)