

2021 *Annual Report*



Inspiring Imagination | Igniting Interests | Enabling Learning

A Year for New Beginnings



2021 Timeline Serving the public during a pandemic...



JANUARY

NAVIGATED A MAJOR SOFTWARE CONVERSION OF THE INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM WHICH MANAGES PATRON AND MATERIAL RECORDS. THE NEW SYSTEM PROVIDES BETTER REPORTING FUNCTIONS AND COST SAVINGS.

FEBRUARY

LIBRARY FOUNDATION HELD THEIR FIRST VIRTUAL VALENTINE FUNDRAISER



APRIL

INCREASED NUMBER OF HOURS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, OPENED SOME STUDY ROOMS WITH OCCUPANCY LIMITS, OPENED COMMUNITY ROOMS FOR LIBRARY PROGRAMS, AND OFFERED A HYBRID OF IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

JUNE

FURTHER INCREASED HOURS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND OPENED MEETING ROOMS FOR PUBLIC BOOKINGS WITH OCCUPANCY LIMITS



SUMMER

INTRODUCED OUTDOOR PROGRAMS UNDER THE LIBRARY TENT.



FALL

THE ART ODYSSEY TOUR OF ARTISTS' STUDIOS TOOK PLACE AFTER SKIPPING THE 2020 TOUR.

HOSTED THE REIMAGINING AMERICA: THE MAPS OF LEWIS AND CLARK EXHIBIT

WELCOMED AUTHORS, IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY, DURING THE READ | WRITE | IGNITE LITERARY SERIES

The Outdoor Experience



Programming Evolution

The year started off with a line-up of virtual programs, which were a great way to stay connected during COVID. All Booked and Issues & View Points book clubs enjoyed discussing their reads via Zoom. Make It craft classes were a very big hit, with participants picking up their supply kits in advance of their virtual class time. Families could enjoy a new story time each week on Facebook.

As summer rolled around, it was time to try some safe, in-person programming by moving outdoors. A large tent, purchased with funding from the Arkansas State Library with American Rescue Plan Act funds through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, helped make outdoor programming possible.

Fun in the Shade

Summertime programs for children of all ages debuted under the “big top” in June of 2021, followed by featured authors such as Nancy Allen, during the Read | Write | Ignite Literary Series in the fall. The tent was also made available for booking by community organizations in need of a well-ventilated space to meet.

Evening Programs



Outdoor programming was not limited to daylight hours in 2021. Family Summer Movie Nights and a fall Stargazing Program rounded out the Library’s program assortment.



2021 Fast Facts

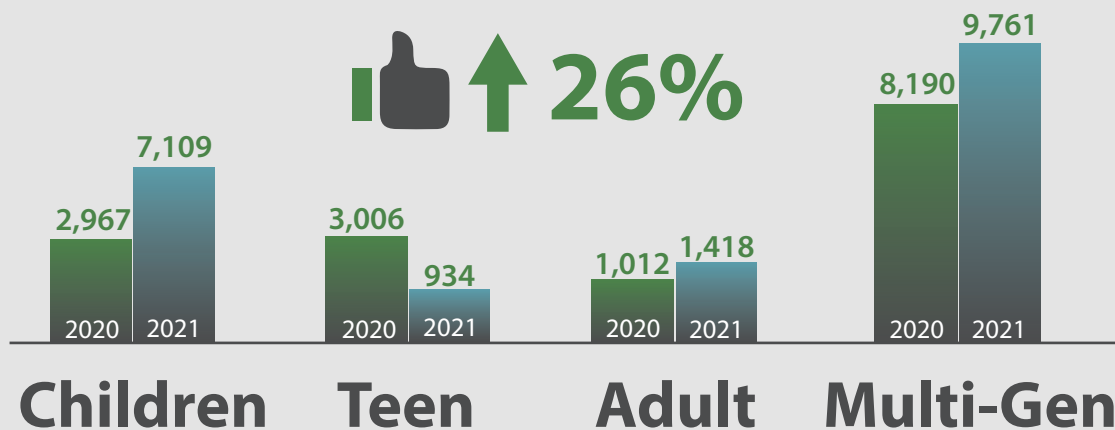
Library visits, total items circulated, and program attendance gradually began to shift back towards pre-COVID levels.

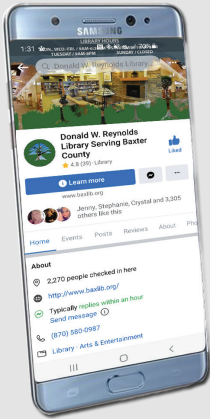
180,729 visits to the Library in **2021**.
compared to **75,562** in **2020**.   **139%**

  **31%** **180,729** items circulated in **2021**.
compared to **137,722** in **2020**.



Program Attendance





Followers Gained

  **10%**

(3,576 → 3,933)

Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter total

Volunteer Hours



  **46%**

(4,776 → 6,963)

Volunteers began to return as COVID conditions improved.

  **110%**



(657 → 1383)

New Cards Issued



Renewing and Reconnecting

Driving positive change for Baxter County



Baxter County Early Literacy Project

In 2021, this community collaboration project remained devoted to its mission of preparing all Baxter County children with the early literacy skills they need to enter Kindergarten. After a break due to COVID, distribution of free children's books through the project's Little Free Library locations picked back up. Through participation in some community events, registrations for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten programs increased.



Community Outreach

As COVID restrictions eased a bit, Library staff were able to connect with more people out in the community. The Library and the Baxter County Early Literacy Project made a big splash at the 2021 Red White & Blue Festival as well as the Mountain Home Kindergarten registration event. The Early Literacy Project was also out interacting with costumed families at the Trunk or Treat event on the ASUMH campus.



Outreach Story Times

Youth Services' Outreach Story Times resumed in the fall of 2021. This valuable program brings the Library to multiple pre-school programs in the area, providing regular story times and rotating book collections.



Creativity and Innovation

Challenging times such as a world-wide pandemic have a way of bringing out the best, most creative, and innovative ideas. The Library, already known for innovative programs and services, made the most of 2021.

Art On-Loan

The Library features an outstanding permanent collection of local and regional art, which was installed when the building opened in 2010. To freshen up the collection and give Library-goers some new art to enjoy, the Library introduced the first in a continuing series of On-Loan Art Exhibits in 2021. Exhibits feature art on-loan from area artists hand-selected by a committee.

New Technology

New security gates and self-checkout kiosks were installed in 2021, offering enhanced capabilities and convenience.



Mom Walk and Talk

The Mom Walk and Talk program debuted in 2021 as a way for moms of young children to connect with and learn from each other. It quickly became a favorite program for young families. The program also provided just the right venue for promoting the Library's early literacy initiatives.



Baby Space

Library staff frequently observed moms chasing after their crawling little ones in the Children's Library. Their solution was the Baby Space. Unveiled in the spring of 2021, it is an area surrounded by cushioned seating for moms, where little ones can play and be read to. The space features an easy to sanitize play mat, educational toys, and books.



2021 Foundation Donors

The Baxter County Library is extremely grateful to those who give to the Library. Our 2021 donors helped support a variety of Library programs and services.

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 Linda Williamson
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 Sherry Zelonka
 JoBelle Zimmerman
 Lang Zimmerman



Volunteers Return

The Library depended on wonderful volunteers who helped provide unmatched service and support for the entire community.



Library Processing Volunteers (left to right) Margaret Park and Susan Nixon

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A Friends of the Library volunteer, Margie Kelly, received a Gold level President's Volunteer Service Award in 2021. A minimum of 500 hours is required to get a gold-level award. However, Margie went above and beyond with 1,133 volunteer hours, pricing books, and working with Friends of the Library during the Covid pandemic!

2021 Presidential Award Recipients

Gold

Margie Kelly

Silver

Margaret Park

Neal Wheeler

Bronze

Barbara King Soden

Carolyn Clark

Charlotte Smith

Chris Langley

David Smith

Donna Kimes

Eileen Jenkins

Janet Wheeler

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Kathy Bauwens

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Margaret Weeks

Mary Lou Duseberg

Maureen Rozelle

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Linda Brown

Bonnie Elders

Donna Enright

Sandra Ermey

Mary Ferron

Marti Frazier

Phil Gardner

Donna Gibbs

Karen Gillespie

Donna Greer

Bonnie Harris

Julian Herring

Eileen Jenkins

Bob Jones

Sharon Jones

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John Kelly

Margie Kelly

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Donna Kimes

Barbara King Soden

Nancy Knopp

Chris Langley

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Susan Nixon

Kathryn Nusbaum

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John Reckard

Jayna Rone

Maureen Rozelle

Noel Rozelle

Christine Schmid

Charlotte Smith

David Smith

Rosalee St. Clair

Aliceson Stallings

Suzanne Sutherland

Susan Thomas

Chris Thomas

Ginny Varn

Margaret Weeks

Janet Wheeler

Neal Wheeler

Jeanne Whittam

Gerald Wilde

Terry Wilson

JoBelle Zimmerman

*Our apologies if we have inadvertently left your name off of this list. Please inform us of this error by contacting Karen Lau-Kimbriel at karen.l@baxlib.org

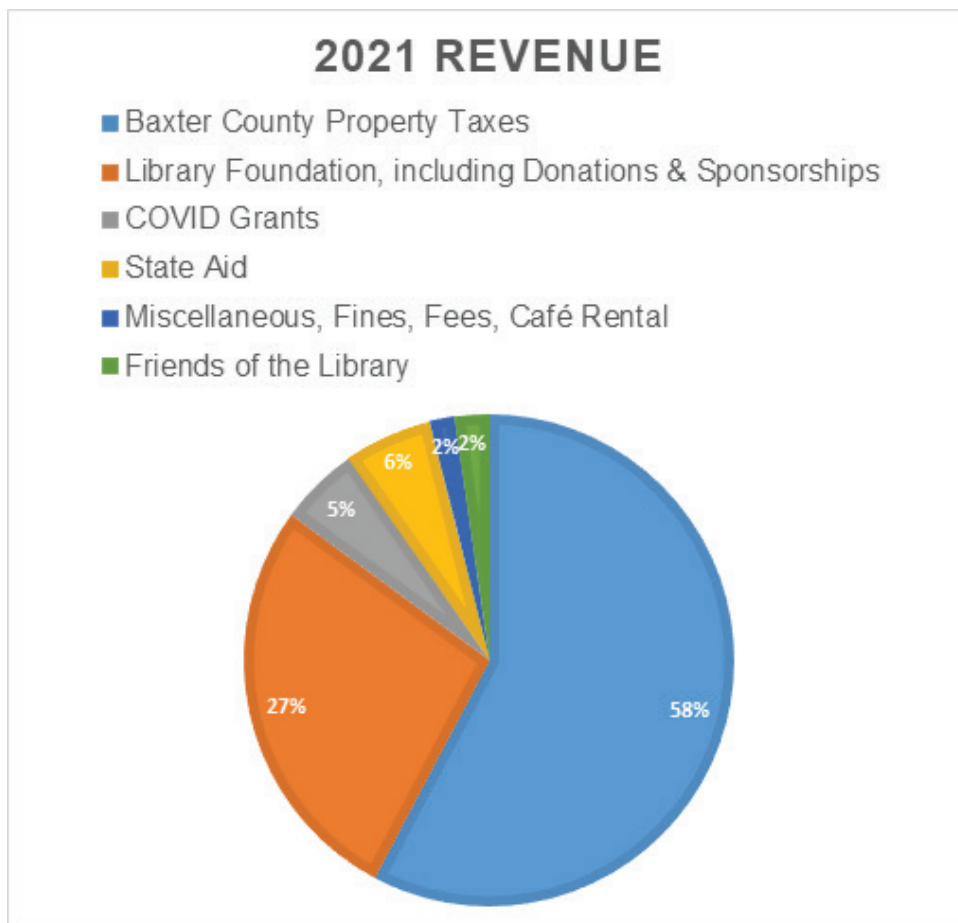


Financial Support

The nonprofits that give us the opportunity to be more for the community

Financial support from the Baxter County Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library is absolutely essential to the Library's operation. As indicated in the revenue chart, both organizations provide a significant source of revenue to the Library. Also in 2021, the Library received COVID relief funds provided by the Arkansas State Library American Rescue Plan Act funds

through the Institute of Museum and Library Services and CARES Act funds. Funds were used for COVID related expenses such as a tent, tables, chairs, and a trailer to facilitate outdoor programming, as well as hygienic improvements such as touchless water faucets throughout the building.





Baxter County Library Foundation

Due to continued COVID safety concerns, the Library Foundation did not hold any in-person fundraising events in 2021. Online giving campaigns: Library Giving Day during National Library Week in April and the year-end Wrap It Up giving campaign were very successful. The Foundation also held their very first virtual fundraiser, Library Love Virtual Valentine event. Ticket holders picked up meal ingredients and champagne in advance. Also in 2021, the Foundation held their first event exclusively for Library Hill Legacy members. Library Hill Legacy members are philanthropically-minded people who have included the Library Foundation in their will.

Friends of the Library

The Friends held their first book sale of the year in May of 2021 with COVID precautions in place. They also awarded their annual college scholarships to three graduating Baxter County students and one Library staff member.





Library Staff with Arkansas State Librarian, Jennifer Chilcoat

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Public libraries are enjoyed by people in every season of their lives, but it seems that people turn to the Library especially during times of major transition. 2021 was definitely a transition year. As the country began to cautiously emerge from COVID restrictions, many people began reexamining and reinventing their lives and careers, and they found what they needed in order to do that at the Donald W. Reynolds Library Serving Baxter County.

If they were starting a small business, they found resources to guide them and used the Library as their first office space. If they were searching for the right job, they found public computers to complete job applications and online skills assessments for exploring new career paths.

The Library's hybrid model of virtual and in-person programming in 2021 allowed folks to safely experience their favorite Library programs again. They delighted in their children's discovery of new things at story time. They fell in love with a new author through one of the Library's book discussion groups or reading challenges. They prepared for college entrance exams, explored new hobbies, and reconnected with friends.

Moms enjoyed the Library's new Mom Walk and Talk program. History buffs explored the Maps of Lewis and Clark exhibit. The Art Odyssey tour of artists' studios was a hit with art lovers. The big tent on the Library lawn opened up a brand new, safe space for children's summer science and art programs.

The Baxter County Early Literacy Project, a successful collaboration with Mountain Home Schools, Norfolk Schools, Cotter Schools, the Schliemann Center for Women's Education, ASUMH, and other early literacy advocates, made great strides with their many outreach programs in 2021 aimed at preparing all Baxter County children with the early literacy skills they need to start Kindergarten.

The Library seized the opportunities that 2021 brought for renewing and reconnecting with the community we serve, and 2022 promises even more. In January, look for the reintroduction of beginning technology classes such as Intro to Windows and Intro to iPads for adults and a new story time just for children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade called Big Adventures. Literature fans will enjoy an exciting line-up of guest authors for the Read | Write | Ignite Literary Series this spring and children of all ages can look forward to the fun-filled, Oceans of Possibilities Summer Reading program. In the fall, the Library will welcome an exciting exhibit, Diamonds, from the Museum of Discovery in Little Rock.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Library in 2022!

Kim Crow Sheaner
Library Director





Sincere appreciation goes to our amazing Library staff for their outstanding work and commitment to serving our community in 2021. Housekeeper Candy Tuck (not pictured) retired in July 2021 after 11 years with the Library.

Library Goals

1. Expand our reach
2. Rethink our delivery of lifelong learning
3. Make an impact on literacy
4. Enhance the Library experience
5. Align ourselves with community initiatives
6. Cultivate and improve our stewardship of resources
7. Grow staff and volunteers

[BaxterCountyLibrary.org](https://www.baxtercountylibrary.org)

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