

# ANNUAL APPRECIATION REPORT

FY  
2023



 **MCL**  
MANCHESTER COMMUNITY LIBRARY

# Mission

The Manchester Community Library is open to all as an inspiring gathering place for the community, providing opportunities and resources for personal enrichment and growth.

# Vision

The Manchester Community Library will be a hub of the community through our role as a trusted resource; providing unique, essential, and innovative services; and by creating a welcoming and stimulating environment for learning and social connection.



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Dear Friends and Supporters,

The Manchester Community Library enjoyed considerable success this past year, punctuated by a doubling of visits, a record number of programs and events, and a healthy financial performance. In all your roles as patron, attendee, and supporter, we thank you for your profound affection for and commitment to our Library.

The fiscal year (August 1, 2022 - July 31, 2023) brought us new leadership, advancing a contemporary model of the Library as a community service organization, collaborating extensively and welcoming everyone, and increasing our impact and value to Manchester and the region. We strive continuously to know our community better, developing and deepening relationships with our patrons, families, donors, town, public, and area businesses and non-profit leaders.

Reinforcing our community-focused culture, all our staff are now patron-facing, regularly spending time at the help desk each week, including Saturdays. Visitors frequently comment on the notable change in the atmosphere and feeling of the Library as a place where they feel more welcome, known, and comfortable.

We concentrated on restoring our core operational integrity after a time when MCL was short on staffing and services. MCL members can now enjoy many more new and best-selling books, magazines, newspapers, eBooks, audiobooks, databases, and Kanopy movies online. Our entry into the Catamount Library Network dramatically expands our catalog to nearly 500,000 items. Further, as a recipient of an American Library Association Libraries Transforming Communities grant, the Library is substantially improving physical access to our children's collections. We will continue to adopt public library best practices as we go forward.

With a strong foundation of operational excellence, we are moving beyond traditional information consumption towards facilitating knowledge creation, lifelong learning, and service to all. Moreover, we are increasingly becoming the vital hub for building and strengthening our community and region. The shift is seen in our concentration of programs on 1) children, 2) education, 3) health and wellness, and 4) creating connections with and among regional organizations.

Despite our meaningful progress, many steps remain to be taken on the road ahead. As we approach our Library building's 10th anniversary in 2024, thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement. We are most grateful for everything you do for MCL.

Sincerely,



John G. Clark, President, Board of Trustees



Ed Surjan, Executive Director



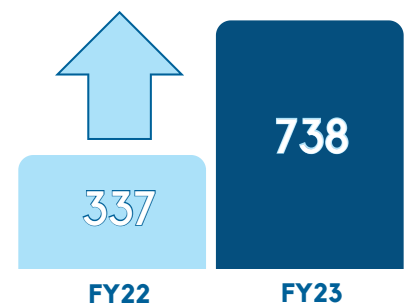
# CREATE

## THE LIBRARY SERVES AS A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO COME AND CREATE.

The Library serves as a place for people to come and create. This past year, community members have explored their artistic abilities and expressed themselves through our various offerings. We hosted special classes featuring Wire Wrapping, Chainmaille Jewelry Making, Psyanky Egg Decorating sponsored by Mother's Myrick's, and Edible Book Making with Someday Farm. Additionally, artistic programs like Art with Amelie, STEAM, and Scrapbooking captured the imagination of individuals of all ages. The Gallery @ the MCL provided a platform for local artists Matthew Lerman, Mary Natalizia, Daisy Rockwell, Patti Campbell, and Rhonda Rattray to showcase their works of art and created many chances for the community to appreciate and engage with different art forms.



## NUMBER OF PROGRAMS





# CREATE

## Scout, Maria, and Josh

### Someday Farm

"MCL wanted us to help them orchestrate a one day program where children use book images as inspiration to build EDIBLE sculptures. We thought the 50 or so children would not appreciate the zucchini, peppers, grapes, and dried beans that they would glue into shapes. We were sure glad we believed Paige and Carrie at the library that all would be creative and fun. As the kids left with their sculptures they snacked on the left over harvests. And we know these kids will eat a few more vegetables and fruits in the next few weeks. Our so-wrong feelings turned into one of our summer high points. Here's to MCL, the BBA teenagers who helped, and all the parents who got sticky in glue and enthusiasm!"

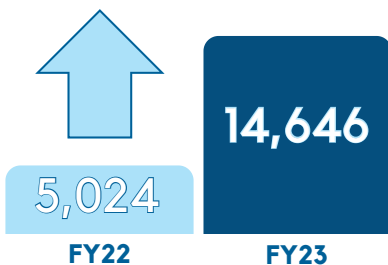


## Patti Campbell

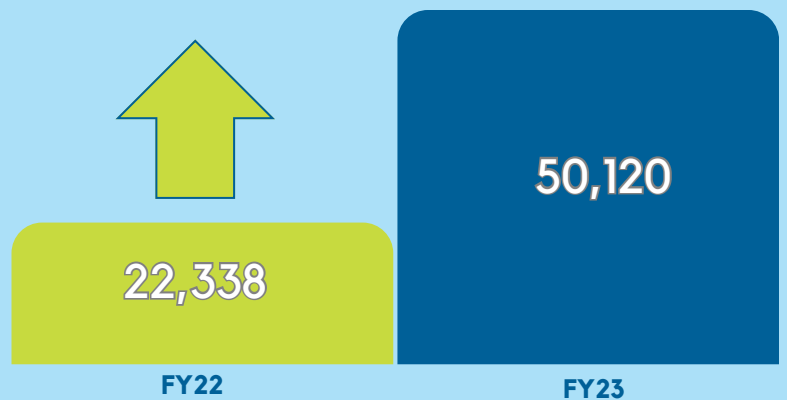
### Local Artist

"I am astounded at the variety of programs for all age groups that the Library offers. The Library has enabled me to put a retrospective of my years of art together in one place and it also exposed my work to many more people. It enables groups of people of various clubs to have a place to gather and share their interests."

## PROGRAM ATTENDEES



## LIBRARY VISITS



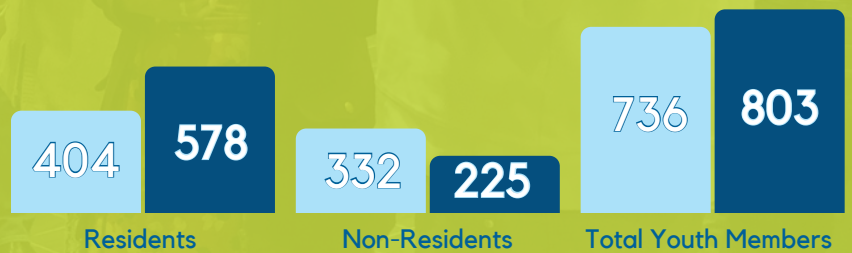
We hosted Super Saturday - Family Fun Days filled with games, competitions, prizes, local eateries selling food, and local musician performances. Through our collaboration with Taconic Music, we offered wonderful interactive programs: Musical Paintbrushes, Music in Action, Strings for Kids Recital, and our much anticipated holiday concerts. Over the summer, we featured local musicians under the tent for our Summer Music Series and partnered with Manchester food vendors for these events. Our weekly programs - Canasta, Mah Jongg, CheckMates, and Story Time - have provided the community with a consistent, safe place to play games they love, meet people, make connections, and enrich their lives.



## Adult Members



## Student/Youth Members



 FY22       FY23

## Harold Aronowitz

CheckMates Founder

"I really fell in love with the Library. I wanted to give back. So I said to Paige, I'll be happy leading the chess club. I figured during the day, it would be retired people coming to the club. I said to myself, 'Hey, maybe I'll get some of these remote [workers] who will show up at the chess club, because their employer doesn't know what they're doing. But I didn't get any. It turned out to be loads of kids, primarily from Manchester Elementary Middle School. It's very, very good. I'm very happy showing the kids different rules and moves."

# PLAY



"IT'S THE THINGS WE PLAY WITH AND THE PEOPLE WHO HELP US PLAY THAT MAKE A GREAT DIFFERENCE IN OUR LIVES."

~Fred Rogers



## Robyn Ehrlich

Canasta Teacher

"I moved to Vermont from New Jersey and missed playing Canasta, so I volunteered to teach at the Library. I love volunteering and having a sense of purpose. Meeting lovely and kind people from all over who are committed to having fun and a willingness to learn new things has filled a void for me. My world has increased many times over, not to mention the staff members that I care about who work at the Library. Their support has been amazing. Smiles of encouragement, marketing this program, moving chairs, and tables - all this has been fostered and nurtured by the Library. I have heard over and over, "Thank you for getting us together, we love this new game. We are so happy to meet people we would never have known otherwise. We love the warmth and comfort of the Library and having "open play" on Mondays."





# WORK

## THE LIBRARY IS A VIBRANT COMMUNITY HUB!

The Library is a vibrant community hub, where people come to work, collaborate, and engage with one another. The 24/7 high-speed internet, free computer access, private touchdown work/study rooms, and quiet reading nooks make the Library an ideal spot for remote workers and students to be productive and focused. We are extremely proud of the opening of the Success Cafe, a BBA student-run cafe supported by Willoughby's Depot Cafe. The cafe teaches the students how to run and manage a business, and community members reap the benefits. Additionally, the Library relies on a team of dedicated volunteers to help with a range of tasks from shelving books to distributing flyers. Our volunteers are an integral part of the Library's success and are essential to its ability to provide high-quality services to the community. We work with local businesses and professionals, including local authors and artists, to bring the community together and promote literacy and lifelong learning. We initiated Community Conversations, a series of discussions with Southern Vermont non-profit organizations, to gain valuable insights into the community's and region's needs and opportunities.

### WIFI USERS



11,000

17,635





# WORK

## Jason Pergament

BBA Director of Student Success Program

"The Success Cafe has been a true example of the Library's role as a community hub. Paige had reached out to me about the idea to partner on this initiative and I tapped a few students with the right skill sets to get involved. Those students applied for Opportunity Grants through the Stratton Foundation to pay them for their internships and Paige set us up with Courtney Callo from Willoughby's Depot Eatery to push the cafe forward. The cafe has been really impactful for the students involved and significant funds have been donated back to the Success Program. We are all so grateful for this opportunity."



## VOLUNTEERS

We could not do the work we do at the MCL without the generous gifts of time and energy from our wonderful volunteers. **Over 100 volunteers** were involved with the Library during the past year, contributing nearly 2,000 hours of service, using their unique talents, skills, and knowledge to raise support, connect people, and build community.



## Vickie Silver

Volunteer Coordinator

"There is nothing more satisfying to me than to participate as a volunteer within the community, and most notably, at the Library. The combination of meeting new people, working alongside caring and knowledgeable Library staff, and just being in an environment where you see others enjoying the books and events sponsored by the Library, leaves you feeling that you are a part of something meaningful. And no matter what skills or talents you possess, there is always a place for you as a volunteer! "

# LEARN

## OUR COMMITMENT: PROVIDE ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PROMOTE LITERACY, AND FOSTER A LOVE OF LEARNING.

The Library not only has an extensive physical collection, but it also provides access to a variety of digital resources: online databases, eBooks, audiobooks, and streaming services. The learning doesn't stop there. Through school field trips, weekly groups, and programs, the Library provides people of all ages opportunities to enhance their knowledge. Popular after-school programs include The Fiery Froggies, a team of local students who design, build, and program robots for competitions. The Library hosts a slew of adult groups and clubs as well. MCL is home to three Book Clubs, NeverTechLate classes, English Language Learners, and French and Italian conversation groups. Additionally, we are especially proud this year to have been awarded American Library Association and O'Neill Foundation grants improving collections accessibility and library services to families.



## Heather Vernon

Fiery Froggies Robotics team coach

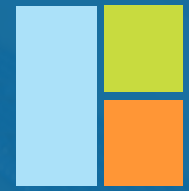
"MCL has been amazingly supportive of the Fiery Froggies robotics group. About a year ago, they welcomed us and our gear into their STEAM activities room. This year, they found funding for us for three new LEGO robotics kits. I couldn't ask for a better partner."

Robotics sponsored by  
Casella Waste Systems,  
Inc.



ESTABLISHED 1975

# LEARN



## Florence J Mauchant

Founder & CEO, NeverTechLate, LLC

"My experience working with MCL was smooth sailing from start to finish. It was a pleasure working with Paige Vignola and having a great environment for hosting NeverTechLate classes. As we teach technology to older adults, it was especially fitting to have such a well-equipped classroom with the latest technology. The Library was the perfect platform for finding students in the community in need of these essential digital skills. One of my favorite vignettes of the experiences at MCL was starting our older adults classes as Pre-K children were ending their singing group: MCL is truly a lifelong community partner."

## PHYSICAL COLLECTION

### BOOKS



23,506

Adult: 17,126  
Children/Youth: 6,380

### AUDIOBOOKS



1,509

Adult: 1,413  
Children/Youth: 96

### PERIODICALS



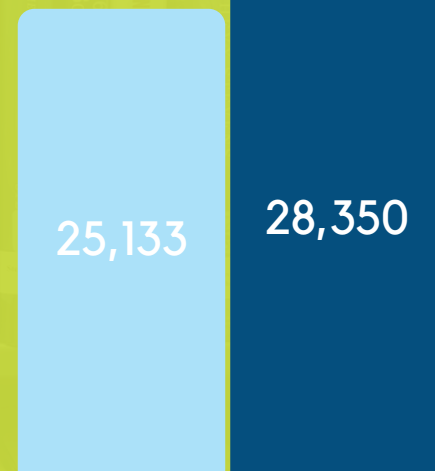
44

### DVDS



3,239

+13%



FY22

FY23

# HIGHLIGHTS

## COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

### Martin Mahoney

Bennington Museum, Executive Director

"The coordination between the Bennington Museum and the Manchester Community Library is a great example of meaningful collaboration between the North and South shires. This collaborative event brought a variety of non-profit stakeholders from across our area into conversation, which has led to new collaborations with other groups. It created a multiplier effect."



# HIGHLIGHTS



The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum Giant Map



Super Saturday Family Fun Day



The Historian's Craft with Professor Jessica Chapman



Halloween Party



ALA Event - Literacy for All: A Conversation on Increasing Accessibility

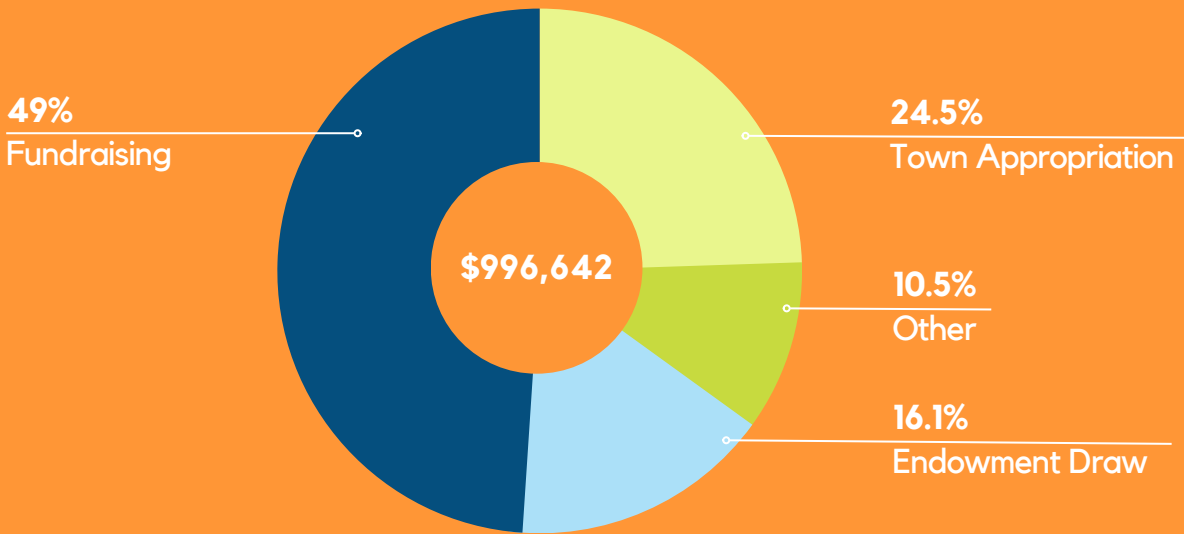
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251 Club  
 AARP  
 AIA Vermont: American Institute of Architects Vermont  
 Avocado Pit  
 Burr and Burton Academy  
 Bennington College  
 Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance  
 Bennington Museum  
 Border & Fall  
 Brattle Bookshop  
 Delish Designs  
 Dorset Energy Committee  
 Dorset School  
 Dutton Farm Stand  
 Garden Club of Bennington  
 Garden Club of Manchester  
 GMALL - Green Mountain Academy For Lifelong Learning  
 GNAT - TV  
 Girl Scouts of America  
 Grace Initiative Global  
 Hildene  
 Invisible Mountain Brewing Company  
 Lake Champlain Maritime Museum  
 Level 3 Brewing  
 Long Trail School  
 Manchester Elementary Middle School  
 Mad Tom Orchard

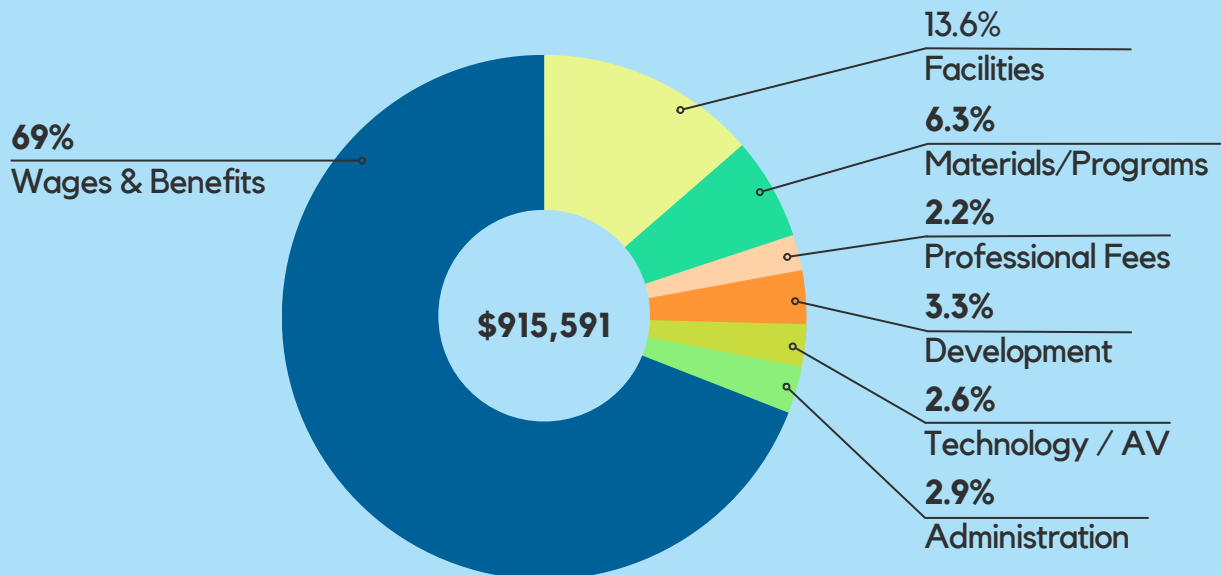
Manchester Business Association  
 Manchester Energy Committee  
 Manchester Fire Department  
 Manchester Gym  
 Manchester Historical Society  
 Manchester Parks and Recreation  
 Manchester Police Department  
 Merck Forest  
 Monty's House Wildlife Rehabilitation  
 Mother Myrick's  
 Neighbor to Neighbor  
 NeverTechLate  
 Northshire Day School  
 Ruth Stone House  
 Someday Farm  
 Southern Vermont Arts Center  
 Southern Vermont Chamber of Commerce  
 Taconic Music  
 The MINT  
 Town of Manchester  
 US Forest Service  
 UVM Extension Master Gardeners  
 UVM; City Market Co-op Burlington  
 Vermont Humanities  
 Vermont Community Foundation  
 VIA Aquarium  
 Vermont Institute of Natural Science  
 Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department  
 Vermont Spätzle Company  
 Williams College

# SUPPORT

## REVENUES



## EXPENSES



# SUPPORT



## Sherry & Michael Prehoda

### MCL Donors

"We are always happy to support the Manchester Community Library, its welcoming staff, and thoughtfully structured space. The modern library resources and technology combined with the ever expanding list of programs and events designed for all ages are an invaluable resource for the Manchester area."



## Frances Skinner Willing Circle and Planned Giving at MCL

The Manchester Community Library exists as it does today thanks to the transformational power of philanthropy. In 1897, Frances Skinner Willing established the Mark Skinner Library in memory of her father for the benefit of the community.

Over a century later, in 2006, a generous bequest from Lyn Hoyt provided a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to expand and enhance the Library's services to better serve the community. On November 15, 2014, the Manchester Community Library opened its doors at its present location.

Frances Willing, Lyn Hoyt, Martha Heilemann, Barbara and Michael Powers, and Frank and Sharron Kropa are among the individuals whose foresight ensures the future vibrancy of the Manchester Community Library for years to come. Won't you consider joining them in the Library's legacy society – the Frances Skinner Willing Circle? Please reach out to Ed Surjan, Executive Director, at [esurjan@mclvt.org](mailto:esurjan@mclvt.org) for a confidential discussion about including the Library in your estate plans.

# 2022-2023 DONOR ROLL

Thank **YOU**, our donors, for playing a significant role in ensuring **YOUR** Manchester Community Library continues to be a hub of the community, a trusted resource, and a welcoming and stimulating environment for learning and social connection. We could not do this work without **YOU**.

This report gratefully recognizes all donations made during the 2022-2023 fiscal year, between August 1, 2022, and July 31, 2023. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of this report. Please accept our apologies for any errors or omissions, and notify Daniel Gostelow, Advancement Coordinator, at [dgostelow@mclvt.org](mailto:dgostelow@mclvt.org) or (802) 549-4578.

## **\$50,000+**

Irene and James Hunter Charitable Fund (Susan Hunter)  
Janice Izzi and Lyman Orton

## **\$25,000 - \$49,999**

O'Neill Foundation  
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## Under \$100

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