



2023

**report to the
community**

a message from the executive director *the space to be*

2023 was another exciting year for Poudre Libraries, and I'm extremely proud of what we accomplished and the innovative ways we served our community. Our 2023 Report to the Community highlights the many ways your Library is a vibrant and essential center of learning, inspiration, and engagement. We continue to see an increase in library visits, materials being borrowed, program attendance, and technology access.

You may have noticed that we rebranded our library to reflect the exciting community hub we have become for residents in Fort Collins and northern Colorado: the space to be. In 2023 our new brand not only gave us a fresh and colorful new look but has transformed the way in which we develop library programs and services. Our libraries are buzzing with renewed energy.

In April 2023, we launched our electric mobile library, Evie, the first of its kind in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. Our community's needs have changed over the years so we are adjusting how we serve you. We're not only getting out and about with Evie, but are finding other ways – such as our Mobile Summer Program collaboration – to bring staff, programs, and resources directly into neighborhoods.

These exciting projects stem from our 2023-2025 Strategic Plan and what we learned from community conversations. The plan focuses on creating welcoming spaces, improving the customer experience in the Library's physical and digital spaces, and expanding where people connect with us. It also highlights the impact we deliver through intentional partnerships and dynamic services.

We have big plans for our future! In 2024, the Library will continue to develop into “the space to be” for the entire community. We are eager to work with you to envision the new Southeast Community Center, a joint project with the City of Fort Collins that will include a new library, recreation and aquatic facilities, and an innovation space. This project reflects our commitment to working strategically with partners to best serve community needs.

I also look forward to broadening our work around equity, diversity, and inclusion. We strive to create welcoming and inclusive spaces where everyone feels a sense of belonging and sees themselves positively reflected in library services, programs, and collections. This work extends to our own internal culture and the way we show up and support each other as colleagues every day.

Poudre Libraries is fortunate to have passionate staff, loyal customers, and committed volunteers, partners, and funders to help us do our essential work. We are in a wonderful position to continue to engage and uplift our community for the future.

I look forward to seeing you at the Library.



Diane Lapierre

your library

MISSION

To create opportunities and build connections to strengthen our community

VISION

To be a vibrant and essential center for learning, inspiration, and engagement

VALUES

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1 Curiosity | 4 Inclusion |
| 2 Collaboration | 5 Intellectual Freedom |
| 3 Innovation | 6 Accountability |

LIBRARY LEADERSHIP

Diane Lapierre EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Ken Draves DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Kristen Draper OLD TOWN LIBRARY MANAGER
Currie Meyer COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY MANAGER
Molly Thompson HARMONY LIBRARY MANAGER
Monique Ramos COMMUNITY OUTREACH MANAGER
Tova Aragon COLLECTIONS MANAGER
Xochil Arellano EDI MANAGER
Katie Auman COMMUNICATIONS + DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Mark Huber IT + FACILITIES MANAGER
Angela Kettle PROGRAMMING + EVENTS MANAGER
Sabrina Leslie HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
Amy Lyons FINANCE MANAGER

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Anuja Riles

creating a welcoming space for all

More than ever, we are focused on creating library spaces with welcoming amenities, even if it's just a comfortable place to sit, where every individual can thrive. How library spaces are designed, managed, and programmed directly contributes to people's shared sense of community and connection. Throughout 2023, we evaluated our physical and digital spaces, as well as how the Library showed up in the community, with an eye toward inclusion, accessibility, and usability.

THE SPACE TO BE / ESTE ES TU ESPACIO

After more than a decade, Poudre Libraries created a fresh look and community brand that reflects our current mission, vision, and values as well as our impact in the community. The new look matches what we've become over the years, particularly since emerging from the pandemic: a vibrant and essential center for learning, inspiration, and engagement. The space to be!

Our new brand started a transformation at Poudre Libraries that continues today. We've put you at the center of the library, and the library at the center of the community. By creating a space where everyone belongs and where people can pursue their unique interests, we empower our community to learn, grow, and thrive.





EQUITY, DIVERSITY + INCLUSION

Poudre Libraries sought opportunities and created conditions for equity to flourish – in hiring, in collection development, in staff outreach programs, and in digital initiatives. The work is ongoing, but 2023 was the start of more intentional equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) efforts at the Library.

create work opportunities

The Library partnered with ISAAC of Northern Colorado for their 2023 Adelante Youth Fellowship Program. This workforce program places young adult students from historically marginalized communities with host sites throughout the community to offer professional development, leadership training, and workforce skills. Over two summer months, Poudre Libraries hosted three individuals in Community Outreach and at Council Tree Library – for a total of 288 fellowship hours. One of the participants is now a staff member at Council Tree Library while another is an active library volunteer.

accessibility

In 2023, we partnered with Colorado State University's Center for Community Partnerships and the Occupational Therapy Department on a mobility accessibility assessment. Each library received the high rating of "Good Accessibility" on the Community Health Environment Checklist—Mobility measure, and further increased accessibility by opening public spaces and pathways to better access materials and services without obstruction; improving table seating arrangements and heights; and adding adjustable height computer desks or putting technology at ADA height recommendations.

Mobility is just one area of library accessibility, and we look forward to continuing our evaluations in 2024 and beyond.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY + INCLUSION *cont.*

embed EDI principles in library service

Poudre Libraries worked to build inclusive and equitable services in the library and the community. In 2023, we focused attention on our internal structures and culture. We established an EDI Committee and hired an EDI Coordinator to promote a culture of equity and inclusion and champion EDI values throughout the organization. New staff affinity groups launched to help build community and greater sense of belonging, and all staff attended trainings to gain a shared foundational understanding of EDI principles and practices.

This is important and ongoing work that will be led by a new EDI Manager in 2024 and beyond as we apply an EDI lens to our services, resources, and programs for the entire community.

Libraries are sacred ground. Library staff are keepers of the holy flame that

Fuels our imagination

Supports our community

Promotes free thought and joy of learning

Provides endless entertainment in a safe spot with internet access

Gives us comfort and chairs by a warm fire!

Thank you all for your critically important work.

NEIL A. *library customer*





connecting with people where they are

Poudre Libraries' role is not just within the walls of our buildings, but across the landscape of the community. What does this look like? It looks like book bikes and mobile libraries, pop-up programs and story strolls, partnered programs and services, community events and so much more. The Library is a direct connection to community, whether we are inside our own spaces or out and about.

EVIE, THE MOBILE LIBRARY

Poudre Libraries' all-electric mobile library debuted April 22, 2023 with community celebrations at Old Town Library and the Earth Day Fort Collins event. Affectionately called Evie, the mobile library is a customized, zero-emissions electric van and the first of its kind in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. It is a fully-functioning library with free Wi-Fi and printing; customized book, DVD, and audiobook collections; and a variety of STEM technology and maker activities such as hot spots, iPads, laptops, and programmable robots.

evie by the numbers

The addition of Evie expanded delivery of essential library services to more remote locations, under-resourced communities, and individuals unable to access library buildings. In the first eight months on the road, Evie visited various neighborhoods and community events throughout our service area, from Livermore Elementary to Oakbrook Senior Living to the Farmers' Market.

- 2,100 miles traveled
- 193 programs
- 10,006 attendees
- 6,085 items checked out

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Some of the most relevant and dynamic ideas grew from collaborating with impacted communities and partners. Together, we drew on each other's strengths and expertise to provide greater access to services and resources that are important throughout the community. We are proud of the impactful partnerships we have with organizations like the City of Fort Collins, Teen Activity Center (TAC212), Fuerza Latina, Alianza NORCO, United Way of Larimer County, Poudre School District, and many others.

summer mobile program

Library staff hit the road with community partners to deliver interactive, bilingual summer learning activities and support to families throughout the district. In addition to offering our annual Summer Reading Challenge, Poudre Libraries partnered with Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Food Bank of Larimer County, and Larimer County 4H to bring lunch, books, STREAM activities, and fun to more than 800 participants. The summer mobile program prioritized youth who have been historically excluded from summer learning because of race, ability, language, or any other factor. This successful collaboration is looking to expand in the coming years with our mobile library and additional partner organizations.

As a long-time summer reading program challenge participant, I want to use this opportunity to thank you for what you do for the community every summer. Making sure that all age groups are included and welcome.

library customer

facilitating social services

Sometimes library users have need for information and services that are outside the Library's ability to provide. This is why Poudre Libraries partnered with local social service agencies to fill gaps where the Library is limited in how it can or should assist. It's a trend across the country for public libraries to see more individuals who have various needs, mental health issues, substance abuse problems, or are experiencing housing insecurity. Many of these individuals and families come to the library for connection to resources and for information. The partnerships have been so successful that we're expanding in 2024 to include CSU Occupational Therapy staff and SummitStone Health Partners providers.



Summer Mobile Program

Outreach Fort Collins

In 2023, Outreach Fort Collins (OFC) staff worked with 176 clients at Old Town Library to assist with immediate needs and agency referrals, and to intervene early to support housing stability. Their work has been such a benefit that OFC added Saturday resource hours at the library in 2024.

Homeward Alliance

The Homeward Alliance (HWA) resource staff held approximately 180 case management hours at Old Town Library last year, helping 111 individuals and families with important social supports. Their work ranged from Murphy Center Program enrollments and intakes to referrals to Colorado Legal Services, Neighbor to Neighbor, and Catholic Charities Older Adult Program. HWA holds resource navigation hours every Friday at the library.

civic + cultural engagement

Poudre Libraries is proud to serve as a community platform for civic dialogue and cultural enrichment through events, festivals, local outreach, and high-impact programs and services. The Library has a strong legacy of fostering civic and cultural engagement, from serving as a voter polling place to supporting individuals preparing for U.S. Citizenship exams to hosting community conversations.

CHAMPIONING INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

After adding intellectual freedom to our list of values in 2022, Poudre Libraries made a public commitment in 2023 to champion the rights of individuals to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment. After a surge in book challenges in public libraries across the U.S. (that continues today), we wanted to demonstrate our dedication to safeguarding our community's right to read and access to information free of censorship, bias, or limitation. Through a variety of events, programs, displays, and outreach, we engaged the community in these issues, their rights, and the Library's role in ensuring free and equal access to information.

programs, displays + activities

- 1 Banned Books Week Proclamation from the Board of Trustees
- 6 programs including the "Let Freedom Read" Reading Challenge, an in-person and livestreamed Kick Off event, and a new "Free to Read" book club
- 537 program participants
- Various book displays highlighting frequently banned or challenged books, educational outreach activities, and local media interviews



The Scoop:Community Conversations

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE + CONNECTION

Poudre Libraries continued to serve as an essential community connector and hub for shared conversations around topics that are important to our residents. Programs such as The Scoop: Community Conversations; Hello, Neighbor (now a monthly series, “Talk, Listen, Connect”); the Human Library® and others brought together individuals with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and lived experiences to engage in conversation and strengthen understanding and connection.



FORT COLLINS BOOK FEST

Poudre Libraries has grown the annual Fort Collins Book Fest (FCBF) into a community-wide celebration of books, authors, and stories. The 2023 theme, “For the Love of Reading,” focused on a shared love of reading and featured debut author Nazlı Koca, bestselling authors Erika T. Wurth and Carter Wilson, children’s author Tara Dairman, and graphic cartoonist Will Betke-Brunswick among others. The event also included a Human Library® experience – a collaboration with Fort Collins Museum of Discovery and the City’s Human Relations Commission – called “Being Me in Fort Collins.” It allowed participants—called Readers—to borrow a human Book and engage in conversations about their unique stories, particularly their experiences in Fort Collins regarding their identity.

FCBF by the numbers

Since 2016, Fort Collins Book Fest has hosted more than 260 authors and 200 sessions, drawing nearly 10,000 attendees. Since its inception, the event has focused on celebrating local and regional authors and storytellers in all forms and highlighting our unique cultural heritage through literature, literacy, and social conversation.

by the numbers

Poudre Libraries' popularity remained strong and continued to grow year over year. We saw increases in all of our major services, programs, and resources.

A COMMUNITY HUB

23,206
NEW CARDHOLDERS

17%
increase
over
2022

115,287
TOTAL CARDHOLDERS

724,266
PEOPLE WELCOMED
THROUGH THE DOORS

14%
increase
over
2022

1,897
PROGRAMS

30%
increase
over
2022

39,775
PROGRAM ATTENDEES

76%
increase
over
2022

Outstanding programs and learning opportunities. Poudre Libraries continues to be in the vanguard, responding to local interests, crafting interesting sessions, understanding patrons' life-long learning desires and pursuits. Thank You!

library customer

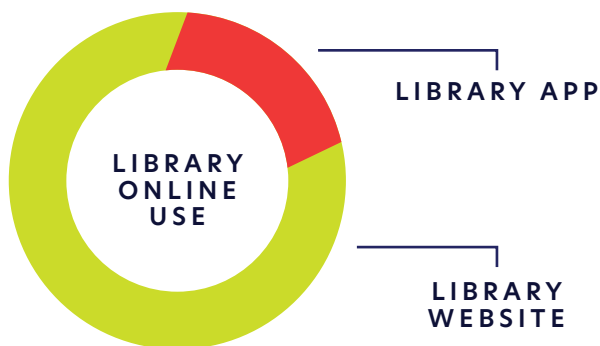
355
VOLUNTEERS

8,298
VOLUNTEER HOURS

fun fact

35% of our volunteers have participated for two or more years.

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS



1,328,463
TOTAL ONLINE SESSIONS

128,862
IN-LIBRARY WIFI SESSIONS
37% increase over 2022

68,850
PUBLIC COMPUTER SESSIONS
27% increase over 2022

LIBRARY COLLECTION

1,919,293

TOTAL NUMBER OF
ITEMS IN COLLECTION



327,315

PHYSICAL ITEMS

1,591,978

DIGITAL ITEMS

Thanks so much to the Poudre Libraries! I've used the library for many years but now that my vision has deteriorated and I no longer see well enough to drive, I rely on audiobooks from the library... I can't tell you how much I appreciate the availability of such a great selection of audiobooks you provide. Thank you so much!

library customer

2,855,628

ITEMS BORROWED

15%
increase
over
2022

2,028,019

PHYSICAL BORROWS

71% of
total
borrows

883,601

DIGITAL BORROWS

29% of
total
borrows

fun fact

Poudre Libraries implemented autorenewals in February 2023.

697,374

DATABASE + eRESOURCE SESSIONS

16%
increase
over
2022

If Poudre Libraries purchased and shelved the more than 45,000 items borrowed via interlibrary loan, it would cost approximately \$694,400 and take up an additional 7,600 feet of shelving.

fun fact

78,894

INTERLIBRARY LOANS
PROCESSED



33,089

FROM POUDRE LIBRARIES

45,806

TO POUDRE LIBRARIES

Just wanted to say THANK YOU SO MUCH to all the library workers who have been processing my ILL and Prospector requests. You all have found everything I've needed, even books that are fairly rare/unusual. I'm so deeply grateful to you for your expertise and hard work!

library customer

STATEMENT OF REVENUE + EXPENDITURES

\$13,402,487

OPERATING + CAPITAL REVENUE

85.1% PROPERTY TAXES

6.5% SPECIFIC OWNERSHIP

5.9% INVESTMENT INCOME

1.2% INTERGOVERNMENTAL GRANTS

0.8% DONATIONS

0.3% MISCELLANEOUS

0.2% FINES + FEES

\$12,352,272

OPERATING + CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

56.9% PERSONNEL

21.5% CONTRACTS

13.4% BOOKS + MATERIALS

5.1% CAPITAL OUTLAY

3.1% SUPPLIES

Please note that these are unaudited financials.

poudre libraries

by the numbers *cont.*

DEVELOPMENT

109

TOTAL NUMBER OF DONORS

\$137,802

2023 DONATIONS

\$90,303

2023 GRANTS

\$5,904

2023 LIBRARY GIVING DAY



Evie Collection

DONOR SNAPSHOT

Fort Collins Eyeopeners Kiwanis Club

The Fort Collins Eyeopeners Kiwanis Club sponsored a collection of English and Spanish children's books special to Evie, the mobile library. The collection is written and illustrated by renowned author-artist Rafael Lopez whose colorful mural design wraps the outside of Evie. Their donation helped us take our programs and collection the extra mile for the whole community.

City Of Fort Collins

During 2023, in response to the mental health crisis facing Colorado youth, the Library received grant funding from the City of Fort Collins and the American Rescue Plan Act to expand our summer IMAGINANTES-X program to include teens from the Larimer County judicial diversion program. These teens continue to participate in IMAGINANTES-X workshops and activities today. They have had outdoor experiences, completed community art works with professional artists, received job mentoring and education options, and had the opportunity to work with a professional therapist.



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poudrelibraries.org



**“Dear Librarians. I love you.
Thank you for all the books.”**

CLARA

3-year-old library customer