

**Bennington City Council Meeting
February 10, 2025
Library Report**

**Bennington Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 28, 2025
Library Report: Lisa Flaxbeard**

The mission of the Bennington Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen community. To deliver on this promise we rely on three great resources: our staff, our collection, and our physical space.

Library Programs and Services

Program attendance and circulation statistics for the last two months are included in the November and December statistical reports. Special programs and events included outreach storytimes at the Bennington Fire Station and Westroads Mall (Giving Machine), Teensgiving, and Holiday Take 'n Makes.

Special events this month included the Teen New Year New You Self-Care Workshop on January 7 (10). Prince and Princess Tea with Preteen Miss Central States Addysen Oreskovich on January 27 (75). The last two early literacy events this week will be Pajama Storytimes on Thursday, January 30 and Saturday, February 1.

Saturday, February 1 will be the next distribution of **Zoo passes**. Our Library receives a donation of 10, one-time use passes (admission for up to 2 adults and 6 children) to Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium in four 2-month distribution sessions per year. Due to high demand and limited availability, we limit the distribution to one pass per household, per year.

Blind Date with a Book will begin this Saturday. This year in addition to teens and middle grades, adults will be given the opportunity to pick from wrapped books with short descriptions. Participants who return a book review form are entered into a drawing for a Cup & Cone gift card. The program aims to encourage readers to venture into new genres and discover unfamiliar authors.

Johnna is scheduled to visit the Legacy School on February 11 and 12 to conduct four **outreach storytimes**.

A new program, **Teen Crochet Corner** begins next week. It will be offered for teens grades 6 – 12 on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 4:30-5:30 PM in the library conference room. Eden Linville, a library volunteer will teach teens how to crochet and give those who do a chance to meet other crocheters and work on their projects in a casual and welcoming setting.

We are excited to begin working with the Bennington Woman's Club again in promoting the Nebraska Federation of Women's Clubs **District II Art Show!** The art show is on March 22 in Bellevue. Artists, grades K-12 in the Bennington area are encouraged to enter.

Summer Reading 2025 planning is in full swing. This includes a preliminary schedule of activities, events, and presenters and the ordering of theme related materials from the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP). Our 2025 Summer Reading theme is Color Our World.

Heather has begun to work on developing and scheduling **adult and general interest events** for the library. A Cat Café with Felius on Saturday, March 29 is already in the works. Other events will include an adult tea tasting, book chats, family game night, and book to movie summer reading events.

Our patrons now have **free access to The New York Times** and everything it has to offer, including News, Games, Cooking, Wirecutter, and The Athletic. Free access is available

onsite at the library or from anywhere using 24-hour access codes provided through a link on the library's website.

Consideration of New Programs and Services

We are gauging our patron's interest in the monthly publication **Book Page**. We began receiving a free 2-month trial subscription this month. The cost of an annual subscription (50 copies of each monthly issue, for 12 months) is \$420.

Bennington High School English Teacher Ben Tomkins reached out to the library about the possibility of partnering with organizations in the community to create a **writing club**. Ben, Heather, community member Connie Wickham, and Lisa met on January 2 in the library conference room where Ben presented his ideas for forming a writing club and short story contest. We discussed his ideas and how the library could participate. Besides providing the library conference room as a meeting location for the writing club activities, we will need to determine what other role the library would play in the writing club and short story contest.

Washington County Community Foundation Grant Application

We submitted a grant application to the Washington County Community Foundation in the amount of \$2,535.68 for the funding of 12 new Penworthy literacy and STEAM kits and four Stay Sharp kits designed for older adults. Library supporter Darrell Logemann serves on the WCCF's Board of Directors and encouraged us to apply by the foundation's 2025 January 15 deadline.

Summary of FY 2023-24 Statistical Survey Report

Attached is a summary of BPL's 2023-24 fiscal year data. Each year the Nebraska Library Commission collects statistical data from all Nebraska public libraries as part of a national survey. This survey includes data elements about funding, expenditures, usage, collections, programs, and staffing. The data is reported to the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through the Public Library Statistics Cooperative (PLSC), in cooperation with the U.S. Census Bureau. The collected data is useful for planning and evaluation purposes and can be utilized to demonstrate the need for financial support from funding sources and policy makers at the state and local level. Submitting this annual statistical survey through Bibliostat™ Collect is also required to become eligible for the public library accreditation program and the state aid to public libraries program.

Library Internship Grant

Our library has been awarded a 2025 Summer Internship Grant from the Nebraska Library Commission in the amount of \$1,000. Recruitment and interviews of students interested in library work will begin in the next couple of months.

Social Media Stats

TikTok: 1,352 followers; 44.8K likes

Instagram: 589 followers; 4,130 views in the last 30 days; 1,006 accounts reached

Facebook: 2,008 followers; 8,002 views in last 28 days; 1,205 reached

Website: 3,176 views in last 30 days

Bennington Public Library

December 2024 Statistics

	2024	2023	Circulation of Print/Physical Items			
Circulation			collectioncode	checkouts	renewals	total
Circulation-physical items	7919	8736	Adult DVDs	27	11	38
OVERDRIVE	2294	1738	Adult Fiction	474	624	1097
*OD Audio	*1054	*817	Adult Large Print Fiction	1	0	1
*OD eBook	*878	*638	Adult Magazines	24	0	24
*OD eMagazines	*89	*73	Adult Nonfiction	83	147	230
*OD BPS all formats	*273	*210	Cake Pans	5	0	5
Book Club Kits	30	30	Interlibrary Loan	7	3	10
Total Circulation	10243	10504	Childrens Boardbooks	87	134	221
Newsbank searches/views/sessions	180/3455/1684	191/2708/1177	Childrens Chapter Books	274	566	840
Computer Use	94	107	Childrens Comic Books	24	58	82
Study Room Use	20	28	Childrens Books on CD	2	2	4
Conference Room Use	16	20	Childrens DVDs	89	149	238
Cards issued			Childrens Easy Readers	469	840	1309
City	3	10	Childrens Graphic Novels	222	328	550
Douglas County	30	23	Childrens Magazines	3	0	3
Omaha	4	8	Childrens Nonfiction	277	456	733
Washington County/other		7	Childrens Picture Books	809	1204	2013
Total cards	37	48	Childrens Playaways	63	117	180
Preschool STEAM-Mon (5)	131	78	Childrens Readalongs	50	65	115
Story Time-Thurs (4)	135	114	Kits	13	0	13
Outreach Storytime-KoalaT (4)	61	74	Special Collections	15	0	15
Outreach Storytime at Westroads	9		Young Adult Fiction	69	117	186
Read to a Dog	38	23	Young Adult Graphic Novels	2	4	6
Open Art Studio (3)	97	44	Young Adult Nonfiction	2	4	6
LEGO (3)	57	57	Total Physical Item Circs	3091	4829	7919
Saturday Storytime (2)	50	33				
Total Children's Programs (23)	578	423	Self-directed/Passive Programming			
Teen Time (3)	30	8	Scavenger hunt	250		
Teen Time Book Club	9	0	Holiday Take & Make	200		
Teen BLAB	4	6				
Outreach Middle School Book Clubs (2)	11	10				
Total YA/Teen Programs (7)	54	24				
Book Club-1st Wed	11	16				
Book Clubs-3rd Tues	9	9				
Book Club-RW	5	5				
Total Adult Programs (3)	25	30				
Visits	2476	2208				
Volunteer/Hours	15/69	11/62				
Printer/Copies-Kyocera	1532	2448				

BENNINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2023-SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

6,329 REGISTERED
BORROWERS

42,729 LIBRARY
VISITORS

120,716 PHYSICAL
ITEMS
CHECKED OUT

24,351 DIGITAL
ITEMS
CHECKED OUT

494 TOTAL
PROGRAMS
HELD

12,558 PROGRAM
ATTENDANCE

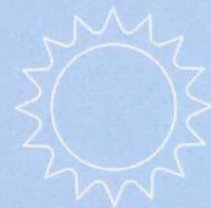


COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Bennington Public Library held Out & About Storytimes at local destinations such as Nelson Produce Farm, Cup & Cone, and the Bennington Fire Station. We also met community members at the summer Farmer's Market, facilitated a community puzzle exchange, and completed our new Community Needs Response Plan.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

During Summer Reading in 2024, over 3,500 children participated in programs such as Elementary STEAM and Community Partner presentations. Additionally, over 750 preschool-12th graders participated in a summer reading challenge, where they earned rewards for reading and were entered into an end of summer prize drawing.



PATRON EXPERIENCE



"We had so much fun crafting this weekend. Thank you for organizing!!"

"The library is our home away from home."

"You have such a good collection of new adult books available without a long wait list!"

"I love the library, it enlivens the community."

"It's our favorite place. Every staff member is so kind. It's like stepping into a sanctuary."

"The library is an important gathering place for the community."

Bennington Public Library 2024 Nebraska Public Library Survey Fiscal Year Statistical Report Summary October 1, 2023—September 30, 2024 <i>The mission of the Bennington Public library is to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen community.</i>		
		previous year
Operating Expenditures	\$321,575	\$266,364
Revenue Sources:		
City General Fund	\$186,179	\$164,872
Douglas County Library Levy	\$122,305	\$86,097
Fees collected (replacement, copier, non DC resident)	\$2,760	\$2,156
Grants		\$2,230
Donations	\$4,668	\$3,135
Library State Aid Award	\$2,177	\$1,949
Conference Room Rental Fees	\$3,713	\$4,638
Miscellaneous Income		\$1,287
Library Collections		
Print Materials/Books, etc. (1,841 added, 1,472 withdrawn)	19,335	18,966
Audio books on CD/Playaways (30 added, 29 withdrawn)	525	524
Videos-DVD's, etc. (28 added, 264 withdrawn)	1,365	1,601
Other-Kits, Partnership Passes, Cake Pans, eReaders, etc.	101	104
Total Physical Units	21,326	21,195
E-books downloadable titles	39,835	35,831
E-Audio downloadable titles	26,293	27,179
E-Magazine downloadable units	5,477	
Total Digital Units	71,605	63,010
Total Materials Held at end of year	92,931	84,214
Registered borrowers (1,021 new cards added)	6,329	6,171
Library Visitors	42,729	36,852
Website Visitors	13,402	12,051
Uses of Public Internet Computers	1,641	1,183
Uses of Newsbank Database-Omaha World Hearld	5,654	4,422
Circulation of Library Materials		
Circulation of Adult materials-physical items	18,337	17,255
Circulation of Adult eBook/eAudio/eMag downloads	16,635	12,967
Total Circulation of Adult Materials	34,972	30,222
Circulation of Children physical items	101,867	89,818
Circulation of Children eBook /eAudio/eMag downloads	7,716	4,429
Total Circulation of Children's Materials	109,583	94,247
Circulation of Other materials-Cake Pans, Kits, eReaders, etc.	512	572
Total Circulation of Library Materials	145,067	125,041
Library Programs		
Children's Programs/Attendance	354/11,469	271/7,361
Teen Programs/Attendance	103/799	75/1,196
Adult Programs/Attendance	37/290	42/450
Total Programs/Attendance	494/12,558	388/9,007

Nebraska Public Library Survey**8.0 Narrative Section**

The Nebraska Library Commission wants to know how your library is making a difference in your community. Please describe major successes and challenges from the past year. Include information about significant programs, people, services and events, and information. Thanks! (Please note, there is a 4000 character limit.)

Staff

The beginning of the Fiscal Year was a transitional time to welcome a new youth services librarian. We also welcomed a UNO Library Science student to complete her practicum before graduating. The end of the fiscal year brought a move and resignation of the Assistant Director who also had job responsibilities of collection development, Teen programming, volunteer coordinating, and other duties. The challenge of finding a good fit is paramount with a small library staff and we entered the new fiscal year with a well-rounded staff that is an asset to the library and the community.

Programming

Library programming is a huge backbone of the services our library provides to the community. While continuing our cornerstone programs of storytime and Preschool STEAM, we also responded to community requests for weekend programming by adding Saturday Storytime twice monthly. This has opened Storytime up to a new population of patrons that do not have weekday availability. A few programming highlights of the last year include three library sponsored book clubs that continue to add new members. Author Mindy McGinnis visited this year and spoke about her process of writing. Our Blind Date with a Book event introduced middle grade and YA readers to new genres and authors. Meeting all the community requests for programming while balancing space and staff time constraints continues to be a challenge.

Community Partnerships/Outreach

We had several successful community outreach events. Highlights include a book drive for area behavioral health facilities; a seed library sponsored by our local 4H group; and a before school book club at the two district middle schools facilitated by library staff. We also worked with the Elkhorn Library Foundation to coordinate their die cuts donation to different area libraries. Our Friends of the Library group has been working to recruit new members which can be challenging, despite broad community support for the library. They supported a new Volunteer Recognition Program that sponsors thank you gifts and birthday cards/postage for our library volunteers.

Facilities/Physical Space

We increased internet speed as an improved service to the community. We also transitioned from an off-site PO Box to a mailbox which has been a help to staff time. We installed new exterior lighting to better illuminate the exterior signage. Our physical space continues to be busy and used by library patrons and community members using study rooms/meeting spaces.

Collection

This year we started utilizing OPL's resources as an inter-library loan provider in an effort to better utilize nearby resources and save on postage. We also re-organized our level readers by subject genre and moved them into pull-out drawers for front-facing browsing. We also created a new "Beginning Chapter Book" section, comprised of advanced level readers and small chapter books and is intended to bridge the gap between readers who have aged out of level readers but are not fully ready for chapter books.

Accreditation/Community Needs Response

One of the key accomplishments we completed this year was completing our updated Community Needs Response plan. Our committee was made up of community members who were eager to help the library best determine the needs of the community. Completing this response plan was a key part of our accreditation process. Reaching gold certification was a goal we set two years ago and staff worked hard to meet these requirements.