

Galesburg Public Library

YEAR IN  
REVIEW  
2025

Est. 2024

DBS and Family  
Reading Park

Here, may time slow down  
and stories blossom.

## MISSION

We serve the community as a vital center of information and provide opportunity and encouragement for people to use our resources and services to meet their educational, personal, professional, recreational, and cultural needs.

## VALUES

We believe:

knowledge builds understanding  
understanding builds connection  
connection builds community

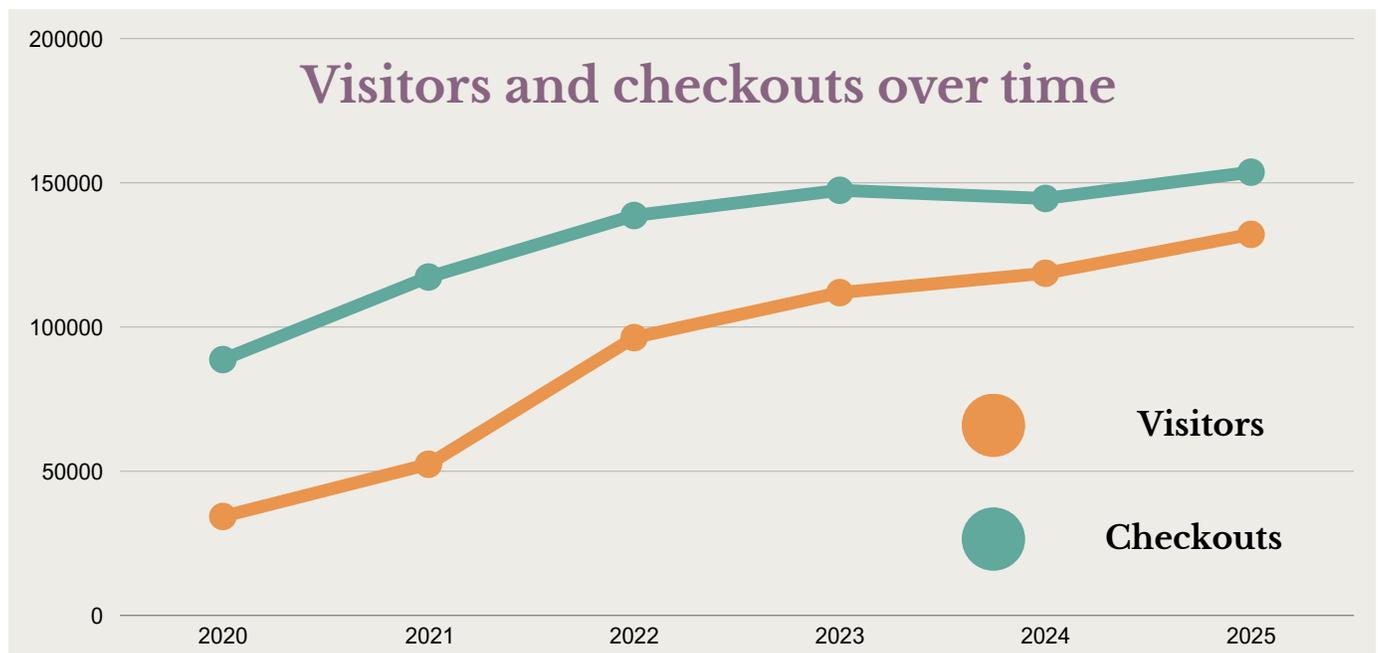
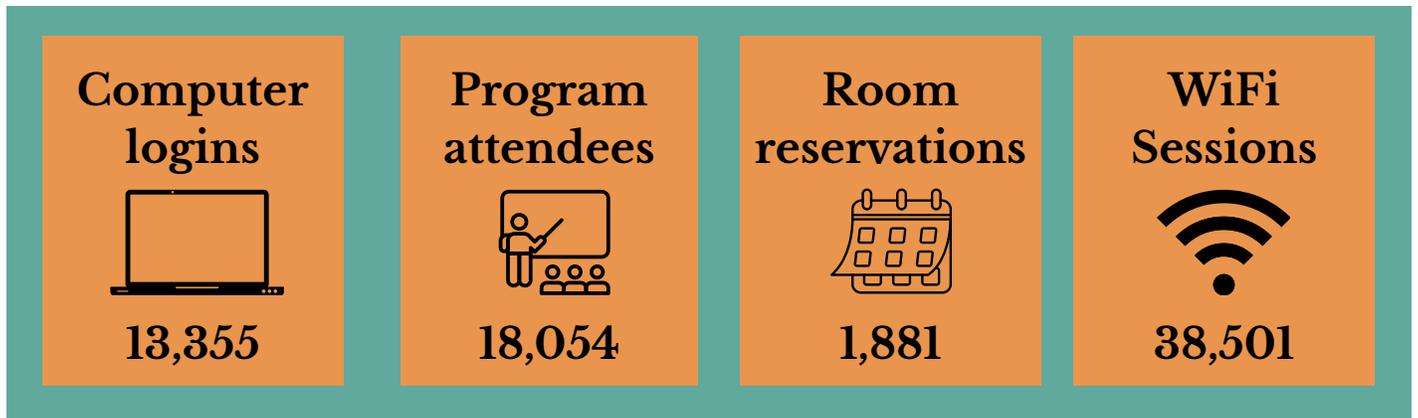
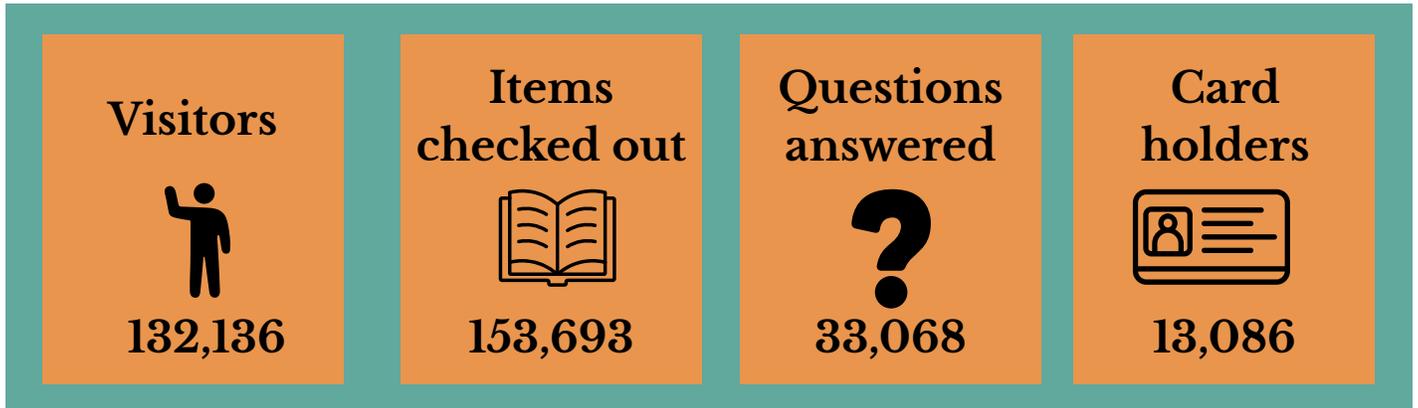
## ABOUT THE LIBRARY

- Established in 1874
- Current location opened in 2024
- Nine trustees appointed to the Library Board
- Thirty-five employees
  - Sixteen full-time
  - Nineteen part-time
  - 22.95 FTE
- 2025 budget: \$2,097,030

264 W Main St Galesburg, IL  
309-343-96118 [galesburglibrary.org](http://galesburglibrary.org)

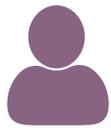


# BY THE NUMBERS



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Of the 4,500 cardholders who used their library cards within the past six months, either to check out an item or log into a computer, 82% were at least 16 years old, 15% were between the ages of 5 and 15, and 3% were Knox or Sandburg College students. Seven organizations have institutional library cards, and 32 residents experiencing homelessness have active library cards. Three percent of GPL card holders live outside of Galesburg city limits. Fifty-seven percent of Galesburg children have current library cards, and 42% of adults and teens 16+ have current cards.



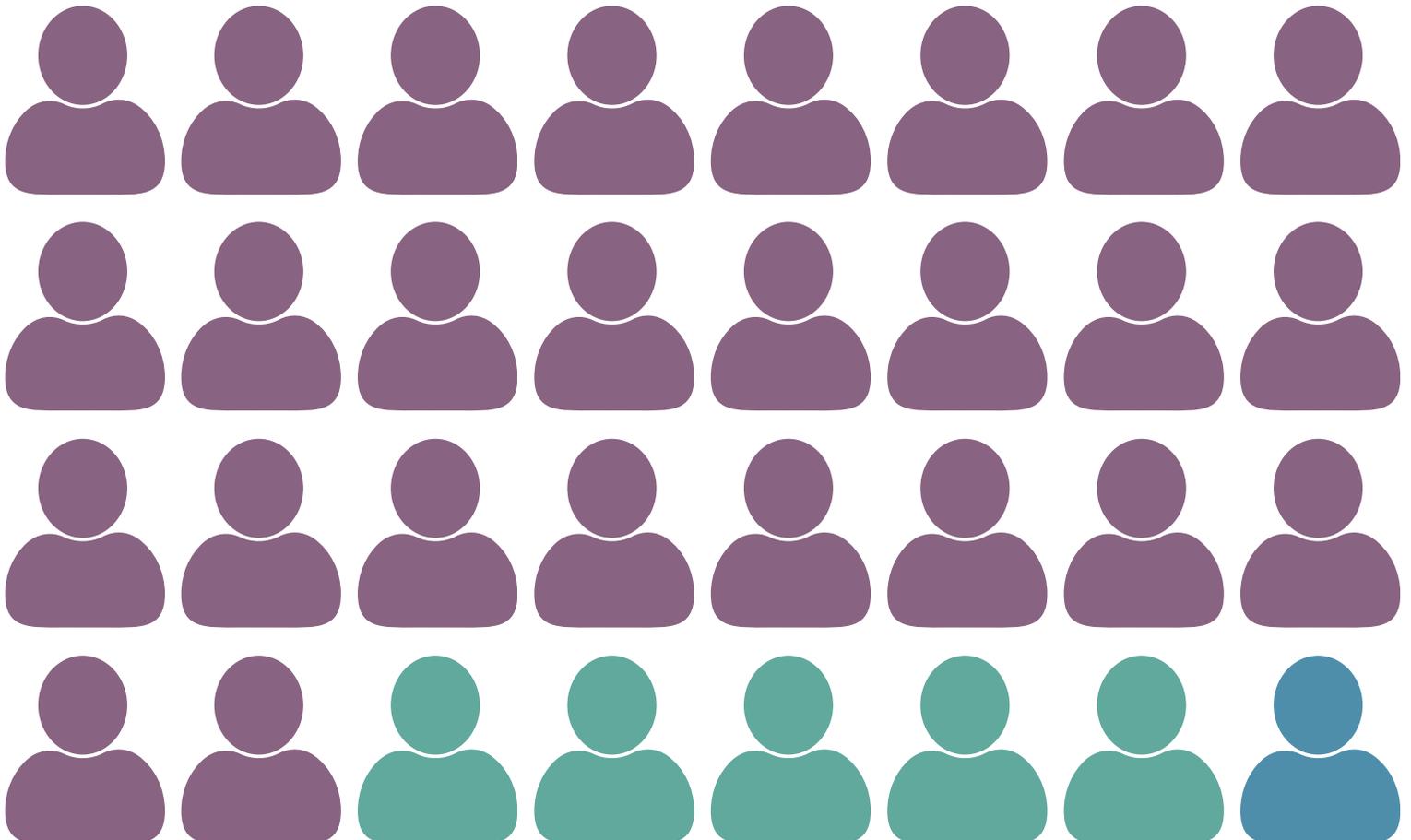
cardholders ages 16+



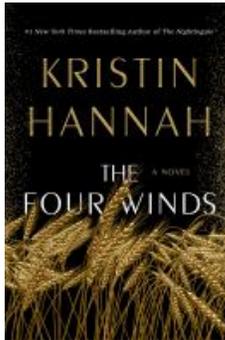
cardholders ages 5-15



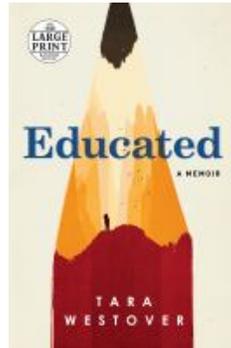
cardholders attending Knox or Sandburg College



# MOST POPULAR



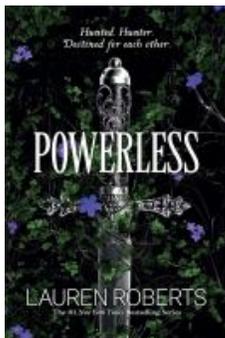
Adult fiction:  
*The Four Winds*  
Kristin Hannah



Adult nonfiction:  
*Educated*  
Tara Westover



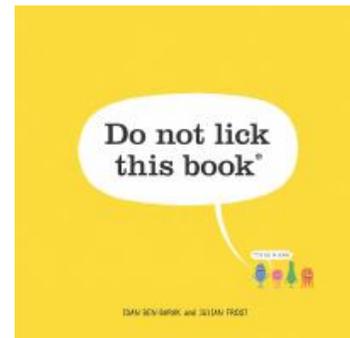
Movie:  
*Wicked*



Young Adult book:  
*Powerless*  
Lauren Roberts



Children's chapter book:  
*Smile*  
Raina Telgemeier



Children's picture book:  
*Do Not Lick This Book*  
Idan Ben-Barak



Videogame  
*Madden 25*  
PS5



Equipment:  
Chromebook

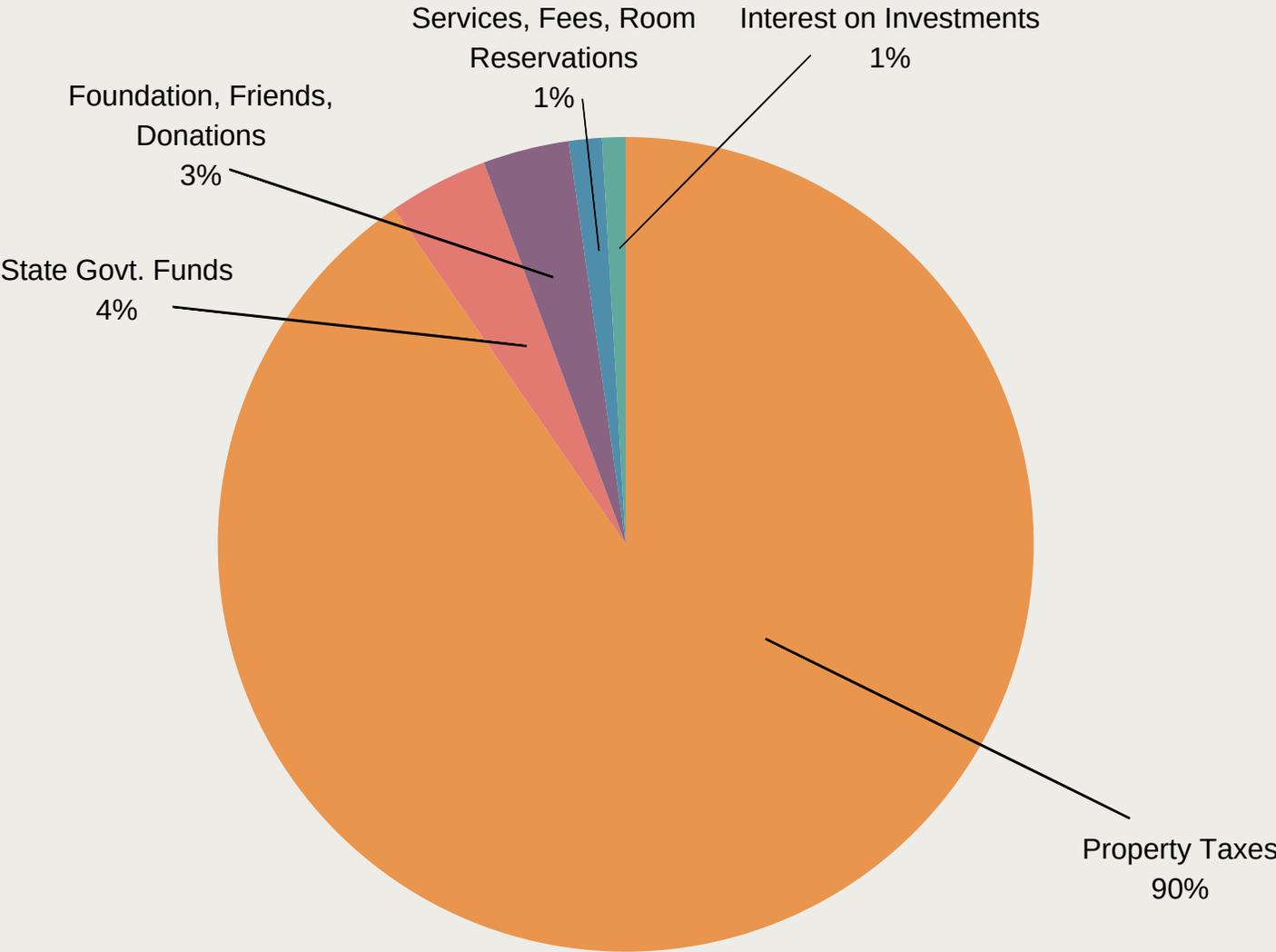


Toy:  
*Nanea*  
American Girl Doll

# BUDGET

## FUNDING SOURCES

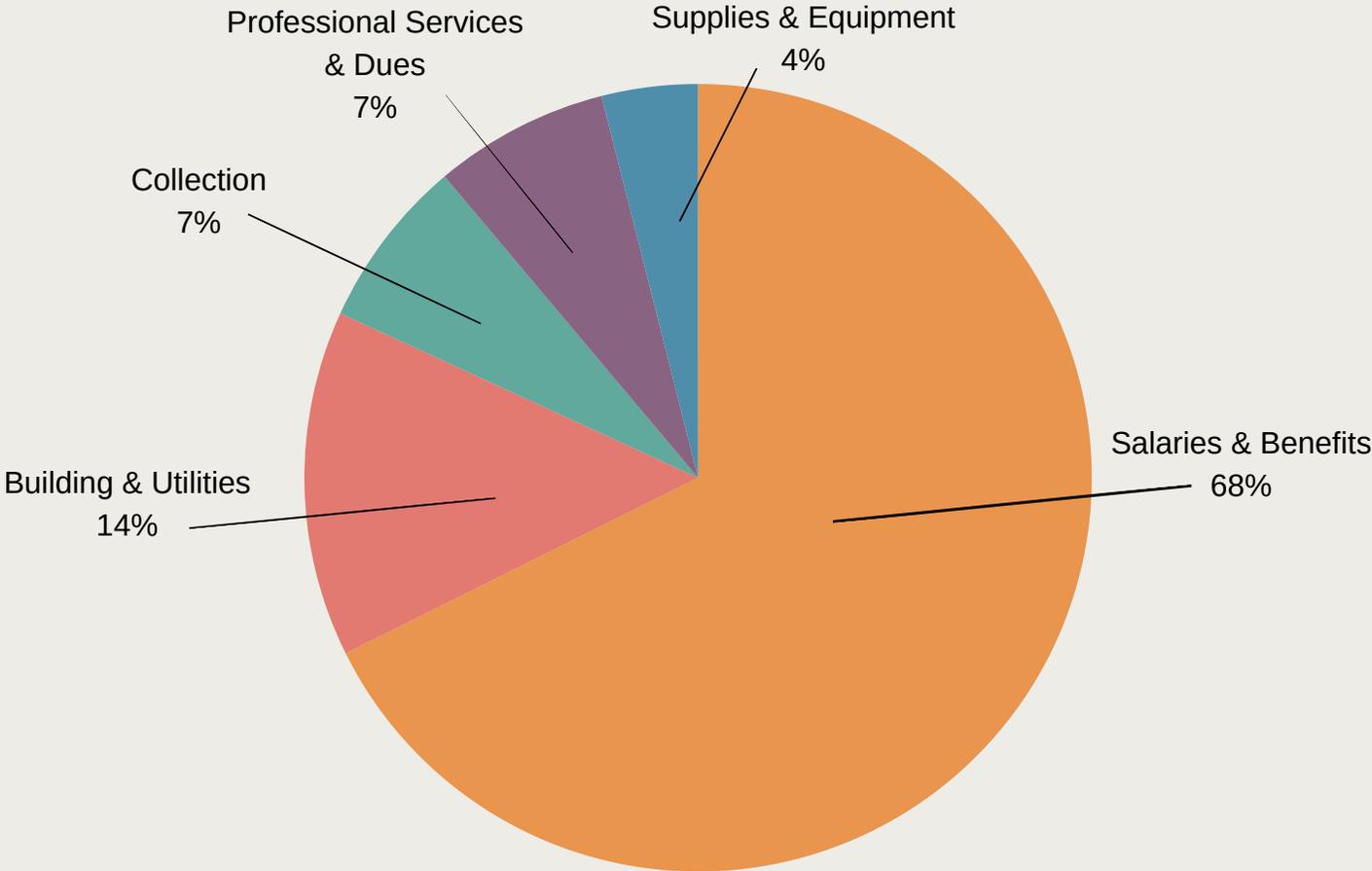
The Galesburg Public Library truly belongs to the residents of Galesburg, who provided 90% of the library’s revenue in 2025 via property taxes. Other revenue came from State grants and taxes, grants and donations from the Galesburg Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library, and library services like printing, faxing, and room reservation fees. For 2026, we will see a large increase in revenue from the Galesburg Public Library Foundation which will support our Access for All initiative, substantially cover expenses for technology, and allow us to continue beloved programs like Summer Reading and the Community Read.



# BUDGET

## EXPENDITURES

The most vital resource of the Galesburg Public Library is the staff, so we invest in our personnel first. Thanks to support from the Friends of the Library and their semi-annual book sales, we are able to add training and enrichment opportunities for staff. The Friends also supported our outreach and marketing efforts in 2025. Our solar panels saved us over \$13,000 in electricity expenses last year. Of our collection expenses, 45% went to adult books, 21% went to children’s books, and another 21% covered audiovisual materials which includes movies, music, audiobooks, and videogames. The remainder of the collection budget went toward teen books, magazines, newspapers, electronic databases, and our hobby collection.



# NEW IN 2025

We kicked off 2025 by celebrating local authors in our new Local Indie section. Find works written and illustrated by current or former residents of Knox County, or works based in the Galesburg area, across from the art wall on the second floor.



Our collection expanded to also include more learning kits and useful equipment:

- Blu-ray Players
- Bluetooth Adapters
- Memory Kits for those with dementia
- Sensory Kits for children and adults to use while visiting the library (kits include noise canceling earmuffs, weighted lap pad, tangram gel puzzles, and magnetic rings)
- Citizen Science Kits (Birdwatching, Exploring Biodiversity, and Observing Pollinators)
- Every Child Ready to Read Early Literacy Kits (Topics include Pets, Emotions, Things That Go, and more!)
- Two Large Print Book Club Kits

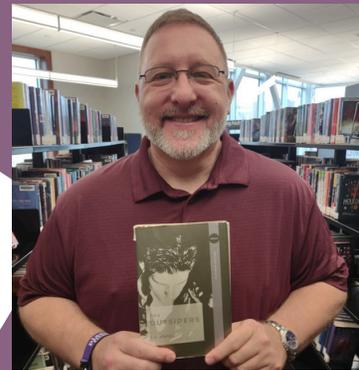


# NEW IN 2025

In 2025, we started a new Banned Book Club, reading and respectfully discussing books that have been challenged or banned, and Roaming Readers (right), a walking audiobook club that meets at Lake Storey.



We partnered with Galesburg Therapy Dogs to encourage young readers.



Aaron Duke joined our team as the library's first Safety Coordinator.



We opened the Skills Lab, thanks to the Galesburg Public Library Foundation and donations from 100 Extraordinary Women.



Patrons may now support the library by purchasing our branded merchandise at [gpl.threadless.com](http://gpl.threadless.com).



# HIGHLIGHTS



Kids-only meet-and-greet with bestselling author and Galesburg native, Lindsay Currie



Summer Reading Program featuring the award-winning Story Pirates, Do Art Productions, and adult game night!



Community Read: *Correction: Parole, Prison and the Possibility of Change* by Ben Austen, made possible through the Illinois Humanities Envisioning Justice grant



The first teen job fair

# HIGHLIGHTS



Teens raised funds for additional gaming consoles in the Teen Zone.



Jigsaw puzzle competition winners!

A visit from Judy!

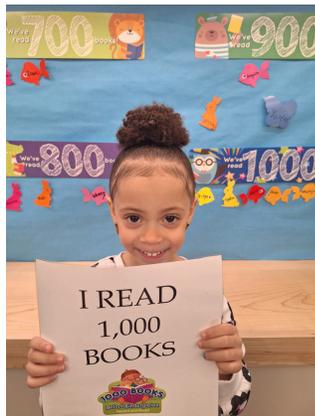


Ghosts of Galesburg at Central Congregational Church



Dance lessons and the first Romantasy Ball

# WHAT PATRONS ARE SAYING



“[The staff] are always so friendly and willing, and if they don’t have an answer, they will go the extra mile to find it.”

“The ladies at the front desk are amazing. Helpful, friendly, and make the day better.”



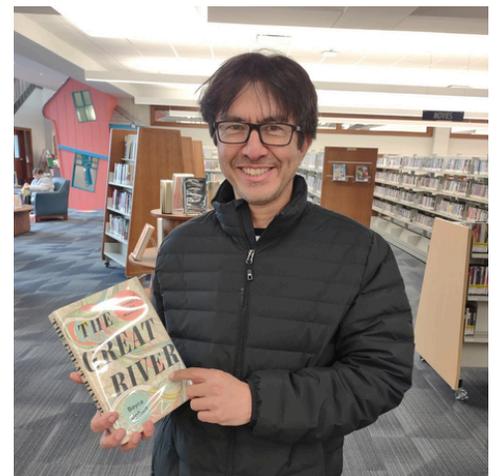
“Your Reference People are Terrific!”



“The staff is fantastic! Always kind and helpful.”



“We love the free programs for the children. Educational and fun!!”



“I have found the staff to be professional, helpful, and kind. They also have a great memory and have followed up when I return at a later date.”

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2028

Galesburg Public Library initiated a strategic planning process starting in the spring of 2025. Fast Forward Libraries LLC was engaged to facilitate the process in three phases: Learn, Dream, Do. The Learn phase entailed gathering community feedback through a survey, focus groups, and interviews; and Board and staff feedback was collected through a survey. In the Dream phase, the Board and staff held retreat sessions to discuss possible future pathways for the library. Below are the strategic directions and goals that will guide GPL through the Do phase, as the library executes our vision for the future.

## Strategic Directions

Serve as an accessible community connector

Expand communications to maximize core services

Foster a thriving organizational culture

## Goals

Expand accessibility and availability of library services to reach more community members.

Expand local partnerships and connections to better collaborate with the community.

Enhance marketing to better communicate what the library offers and how the library benefits the community.

Ensure responsive programs, collections, and services to meet diverse interests, needs, and cultures.

Invest in professional growth and development for staff.

Strengthen communication and collaboration among staff.

# WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2026

## ACCESS FOR ALL

With the support of the Galesburg Public Library Foundation, we will strive to bring books, resources, and connection directly to those who need it most.



Books in the 'Burg will bring our children's collection into the community, meeting readers where they are.



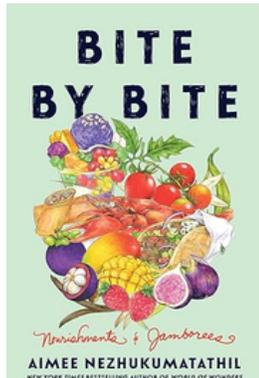
We will launch our new ADA compliant website.



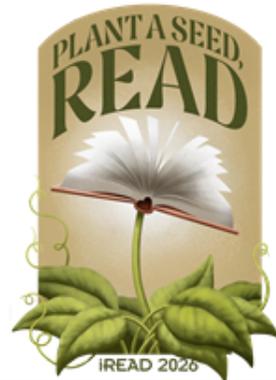
A new Outreach & Marketing Coordinator will join our team!



# WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2026



Pick up a Community Read book in April: *Bite by Bite* by Aimee Nezhukumatathil.



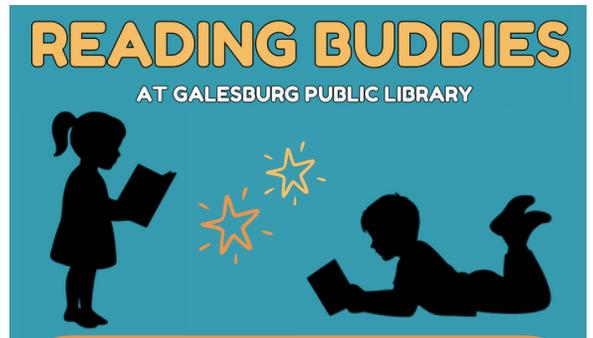
All ages are invited to sign up for the Summer Reading Program in June and July.



Teens in grades 7-12 will make a movie together, thanks to funding from the Galesburg Public Library Foundation.



Visit the *Journey to Freedom: Illinois' Underground Railroad* exhibit in May.



New and developing readers will get extra practice with our trained volunteers.

