

Garfield County Libraries

Annual Report 2017

I love my
GARFIELD COUNTY
LIBRARIES

because: the
Library gives us
books.



A Message from Our Staff

Our Garfield County Libraries were put to the test in 2017. Library funding dropped by 30% due to a major reduction in property tax revenue from the previous year. In order to reduce spending on this scale we were forced to cut many facets of our budget.

We started by reducing our open hours in December of 2016, and were forced to reduce them again in September of 2017 due to extremely tight staffing levels. Additionally, the number of computers available for both for the public and staff was cut. And, we reduced the amount of new books and materials purchased in 2017 by half. These cuts affected all our library users.



Reduced hours meant that community members had reduced access to our library buildings, public computers, as well as books and materials.

Despite these challenges, our staff continued to work hard to keep the libraries running. The essential services provided by libraries are important to all of us and we will remain committed to striving to meet the information, education, and entertainment needs of our community.

-Amy Shipley, Assistant Executive Director

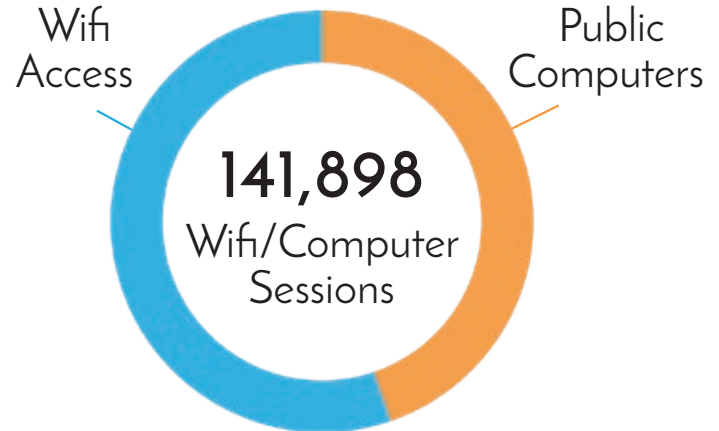
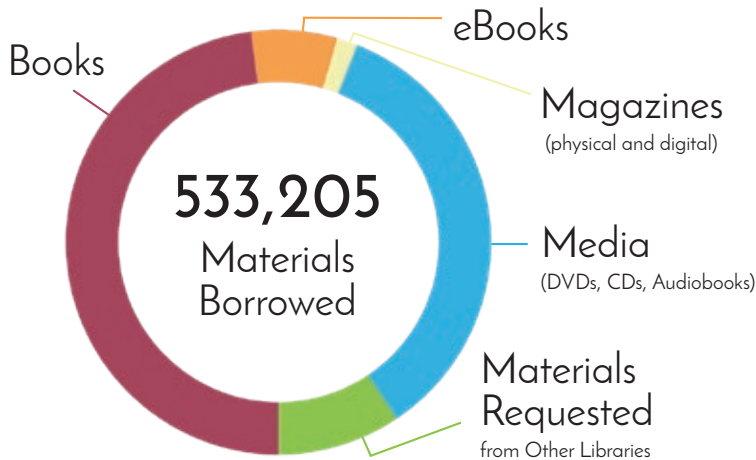


Library staff members show off library cards during a staff training day.

How Our Communities Use Libraries

Despite the budget cuts to materials and open hours, our communities still heavily use their libraries. In fact, checkouts of eBooks continues to rise - up 40% from last year!

Additionally, to meet the increasing demand for public computers and internet connections, we pursued and secured a Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District grant to purchase sixty new Chromebooks. These machines expand public access to the internet and provide local students with a tool to help with schoolwork. Each library has a set of ten Chromebooks which opens up possibilities for classes at the library as well as project collaboration.





I love my
GARFIELD COUNTY
LIBRARIES
because:
it really is a
COMMUNITY
center!

Dan N. and Emily J. in Silt express what the Garfield County Libraries mean to them.

Encouraging Community Connections

Each year we strive to facilitate learning and create conversations with an assortment of events. In 2017, the Garfield County Libraries Foundation made library events - including the Summer Reading Program - possible through financial support.

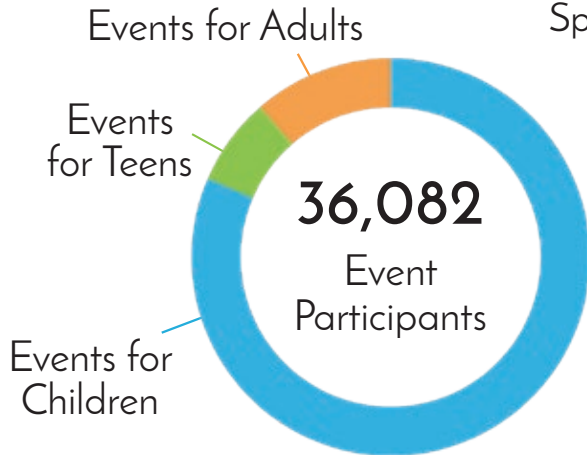
Additionally, our libraries hosted educational and recreational events tailored to our communities. The Executive Director of ACLU Colorado engaged a capacity crowd in Carbondale in a Q&A session on civil liberties. The Spring Lecture Series in Glenwood Springs featured the chairperson of

Native American Cultural Programs,

an evolutionary biology professor from CU Boulder, and a Western Americana singer-songwriter during three separate events. And, multiple libraries drew record crowds when hosting events surrounding the solar eclipse.

"I've experienced profound benefits from the health presentations and found inspiration from the live music at my library."

-Steve V. of New Castle





Youth Services Coordinator Amy Wright interacts with curious children during a Storytime in Rifle.

Strategic Planning

We paved the way for a new strategic plan by working with community leaders and surveying the entire community for input. The goals of this process were to clarify library priorities, and work toward a future that supports the goals and aspirations of the community members who live, work, and play alongside us.

Clear themes emerged from this work, including the need for access to information, lifelong learning, community connections, and financial stability. The strategic plan will be completed in early 2018.

Strategic Planning Survey Comments

“

*“Our libraries are a crucial piece of our community.
It’s a place where friends meet and discovery happens.”*

*“I am just so grateful to have a library that offers so
many wonderful things to the community where I live.”*

”



Library staff lead a strategic planning session in Glenwood Springs with members of the community.

Creative Solutions to Reduced Revenue

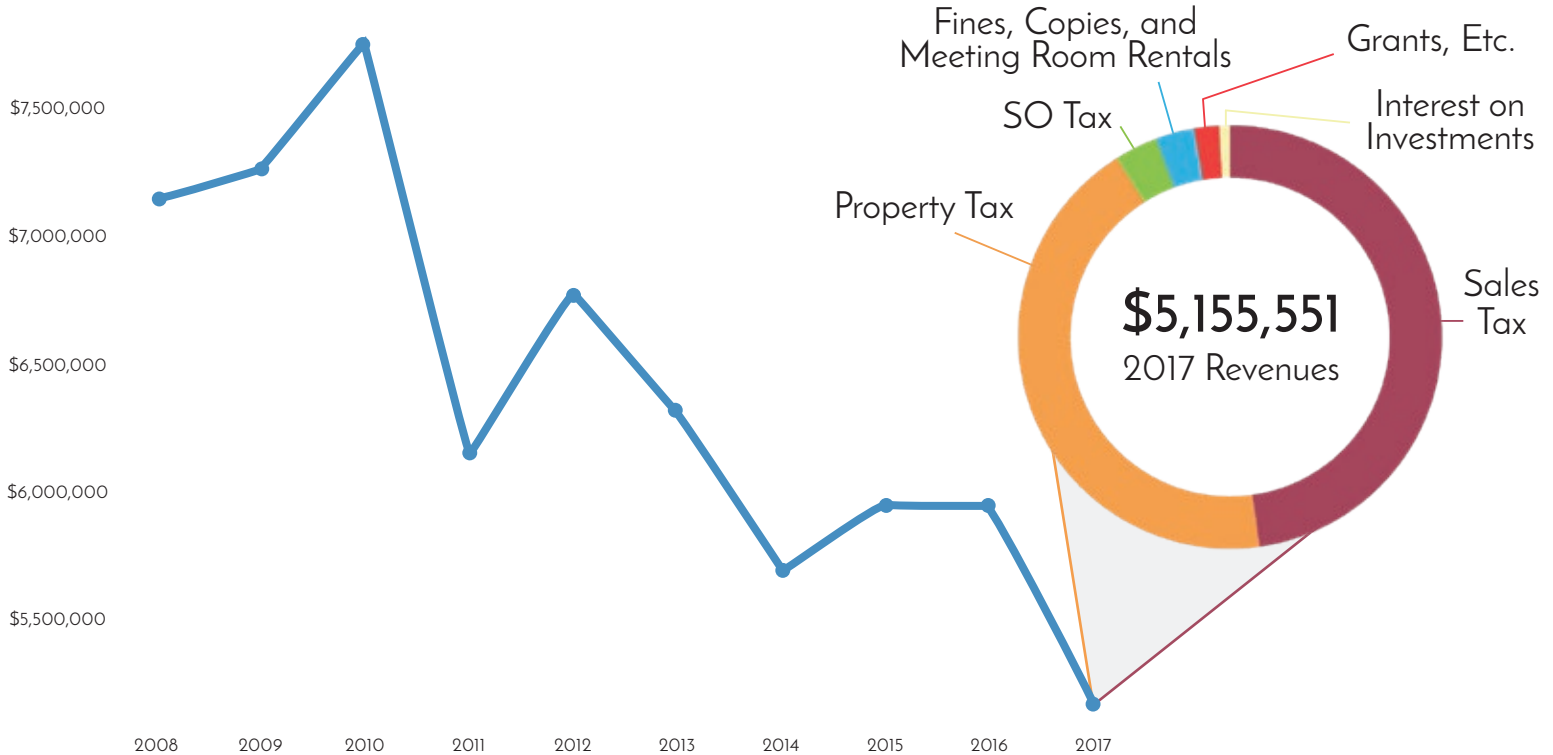
Our libraries faced tremendous challenges in 2017 due to a \$1.2 million decrease in property tax revenue. This equated to a roughly thirty percent drop in our operations budget and necessitated major spending cuts, limiting the number of books we could purchase and the number of hours our libraries could be open each week.

However, during this challenging time we used the opportunity to reexamine our operations and were able to come up with creative solutions. We were able to maintain much of our technology offerings by switching to more cost-efficient technologies. And, despite decreases to our materials budget, we were able to continue to provide books and materials options via our partnerships with neighboring library systems. Furthermore, the most impactful solution came from refinancing the debt we incurred building our libraries. Through this process we immediately realized an annual savings of \$168,200 and will continue to save that amount each year going forward. This refinancing also lessened our overall debt by \$2 million!

Although sales tax revenues were strong in 2017 and finished the year higher than projected, we were required to set aside \$139,232 of that sales tax revenue in order to refund taxpayers (because that amount was over the growth limit defined by the State of Colorado).

Going forward, library staff will continue to look for opportunities to maintain library programs and services through thoughtful planning, partnerships, and financial discipline.

Declining Revenues Over the Past 10 Years



Thank You 2017 Donors & Grantors

Alpine Bank
Jennifer Bartels
Fred Bartlett
Bookcliff Survey Services, Inc.
Bernard & Nancy Brant
Nancy Brown
Jim & Connie Calaway
Lucy Cerise
City Of Rifle
Carolyn Clipperly
Clough Family Foundation
Community Newspapers of Colorado
Marilyn Cozza
Dark Sky LLC
James Delaney
David Durrance
Eaker Electric
Julie Edman
Greg & Kathy Feinsinger
Friends of the New Castle Library

Michelle Foster
Garfield County Federal
Mineral Lease District
Gentle Friends Veterinary Hospital
Grand Valley Kiwanis
Beck Hamilton
Elly Harder
Karen Harvey
Christine Helling
Gary Hershoren Trust No. 1
Janet Hess
Gregory Jeung
Juicy Lucy's Steakhouse
Zella Kolber
Amy Krakow
Bruce & Eileen Leland
William Lightstone
Marlene Manown
Ernst & Wilma Martens
Foundation

Miller Dry Goods
Jennifer Miller
Kathleen Molitor
Patty Morrison
Barbara Pavlin & Sarah McCurdy
Adrian Rippy-Sheehy
Nancy Selzer
Amy Shipley
Angela Strode
Richard Voorhees
Pat Wanner
Westech LLC
Charlie Westerman
Garland & Leola White
Arlen & Carla Wussow
Elizabeth Wysong

Find Your
STORY 
GARFIELD COUNTY
LIBRARIES