

**SINCLAIRVILLE FREE LIBRARY
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
2024**



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Introduction

The Board of Trustee members developed a strategic plan for the years 2024-2029 to address the issues of concern and need for the Sinclairville Free Library. This strategic plan is posted on the library's website (sinclairvillelibrary.org) and serves as a monthly agenda item, helping us reach our greater goals for the community which we serve.

History of Sinclairville Free Library

Rev. Elbridge P. McElroy, Congregational Minister of Sinclairville, had no idea that 130 years later his generous offering of his personal library of 185 books would turn into a celebration for the village of Sinclairville and the towns of Charlotte and Gerry on July 8, 2000. This was the day of the Grand Opening of the new library building!! The Deed of Trust, written in February 1870 stated the library was formed "...in order to encourage the youth of Sinclairville and vicinity to form good habits and a taste for reading..."

The first home for the library was in the law offices of the Honorable Obed Edson. In 1871 the library was moved to the shop of Charles W. Hedges. We are unsure as to how long the library remained at the Hedges' shop. The next mention of the library's location is in November 1885 where it was listed as in the home of William A. Fife. A fourth move, which occurred on January 15, 1908 found the library renting space for \$2 a month on the corner of Lester and Main Streets. On January 8, 1937 the library moved to the Sinclairville Grange Building at the corner of Main and Park Streets. When the Grange Building was torn down, the library moved to the Administrative Building of the Cassadaga Valley Central School, located at the corner of Park and Church Streets. In 1977 the library moved into the basement of the American Legion Building which was renamed the David Vern Luce Building in April 2000. During the week of May 8, 2000 the library moved for the eighth and final time into a brand-new building located on Main Street.

Nineteen librarians have served in the various locations the library has been housed. We honor them all for their diligence and dedication by listing their names:

Miss Fanny A. Edson, Charles W. Hedges, Edwin L. Husted, A.L. Staples, John M. Edson, William A. Fife, William Hinchlief, Miss Abbie Doty, William C. Scott, Mrs. F.B. Putnam, Mrs. Fred Briggs, Miss Genevera Ticknor (later Mrs. Sears), Mrs. Phillip Edson, Mrs. Charles Ervin, Mrs. Maurice Westley, Mrs. Earl (Irene) Minkler, Patricia Webb, Lynn Ann Faber, Lisa Greeley, and Beth Hadley.

Performance Indicators	2019	2020**	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total PC Use	1284	311	192	532	562	453
Grand Total Circulation (Collection Use)	20213	11991	12294	13301	15226	14938
Total Adult and Children's Book Circulation	9177	5852	8274	8687	9481	10001
Total Electronic Content Use	2267	1856	1674	1742	2278	2106
Grand Total Holdings	34323	48739	48876	50303	52097	***** 19501
Inter-Library Loan - Materials Received (Borrowed)	1	1870	2328	2415	2721	3363
Inter-Library Loan - Materials Provided (Loaned)	0	649	1025	1152	1446	1527
Additions to Holdings	2659	*14575	6562	5529	5029	***** 723
Total Local Public Funds	26750	27000	26750	27000	27500	96000
Total Number of Program Sessions	399	183	*** 293	*** 390	*** 351	*** 416
Total Program Attendance	4135	1330	*** 2172	*** 3555	*** 3732	*** 4010
Reference Transactions	1427	1196	1640	1204	912	1037
All Registered Borrowers	1240	1253	1276	1365	1385	1508
Registered Resident Borrowers	925	937	958	1026	1033	1111
Registered Non-Resident Borrowers	315	316	318	3339	352	397
Hours Open	27	27	27	27	27	27
Library Visits	21869	6437	8861	11657	10942	10974
Population Chartered to serve	3222	3222	3222	3309	3309	3309
Total Collection Expenditures	\$8414	\$6090	\$8228	****\$11564	\$7638	\$6708
Total Operating Fund Receipts	\$50289	\$52675	\$83742	\$75323	\$76695	\$170255

* CCLS increased digital materials due to Covid ** Pandemic year ***
Includes online programs and outreach **** Increased due to grant
funding *****2024 Physical items only. Does not include electronic
materials held by CCLS that were included in previous years.

2024 Total Public Funds includes \$68000 from CVCS school
taxes that is for the library's 2025 budget year. 2024 Total
Operating Receipts includes \$55000 from grants, gifts and
endowments.

The Vision of Sinclairville Free Library



Core Purpose:

Building Community through Life-Long Learning

Mission Statement:

***The Sinclairville Free Library strives to educate,
inform, and meet the needs of the people it serves.
The library operates as a community center supporting
life-long learning with special emphasis on programs
for children and adults.***

STRATEGIC ISSUES

- *Enhance library funding streams*
 - *Strengthen Outreach*
 - *Preserve local history collection*
- *Strengthen volunteer and staff development*
 - *Update library policies*
- *Obtain community input regarding future library roles*

Goal #1:

By 2029, we will continue to enhance library funding streams by creating relationships with donors, both private and charitable, which have a stake in the local community. Work with the Cassadaga Library/Mary Seymour Library to achieve funding through School Based Tax source.

Sustainable library funding was secured through the Cassadaga Valley Central School tax levy system by a budget proposition approved on May 21, 2024. The vote was 263 in favor and 103 opposed. \$68,000 funding was received in November, 2024 for the library's 2025 fiscal year.

Relationships with donors were cultivated through GiveBigCHQ, online fundraising platform, while maintaining relationships with traditional donors through the Annual Appeal.

Operating Funds receipts this year included grants from the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation Blossom Fund, American Library Association, Holmberg Foundation, the Lenna Foundation, and Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System. Other receipts included memorial donations to honor Lisa Waite and funds from the library's endowment at the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation.

Fundraising efforts included the annual book and bake sale, chicken BBQ during the Valley Historical History Fair, and sale of painted rocks provided by volunteer Cathy Obert.

Goal #2:

By 2029, the library will continue to strengthen its outreach to the chartered service area, including the Town of Gerry and Cassadaga Valley Elementary, Middle and High Schools, and other community groups.

The library conducted outreach to the Town of Gerry through deliveries of library materials to the Homestead and by offering digital services assistance, book club and life story writing programs there. A “Little Free Library” is maintained in Gerry that makes free books available in that location. The library presented “Mobile Summer Reading Program” for the participants in both the Gerry and Sinclairville Summer Recreation Programs. Outreach to Gerry also included an attempt to provide story hour programming at the Methodist Church. The program was discontinued due to lack of participation.

Advocacy efforts at CVCS resulted in Elementary class field trips to the library and a library card initiative that led to many children getting their own library cards to use on their field trip visits.

We also provided library programming to the Wrap childcare program located at Park Methodist Church with weekly visits to read books to the youngsters there. Partnership with Cassadaga Valley Central School was strengthened by presentations of library information at school board meetings. Outreach also included monthly visits to Pre-K classes at CVCS and to the Little Seeds preschool program located at Park Church.

Outreach to school children was enhanced by the library’s participation in the Sinclairville Elementary School Open House and Literacy Night. The Library Director presented a Life Story Writing Program at the CVCS Family Resource Center.

Goal #3:

By 2029, the library will have catalogued its local history collection and made digitized materials available in an online searchable format.

Staff and volunteers continue to work on digitizing and cataloging the local history collection.

Goal #4:

By 2029, the library will have a plan for staff and volunteer development which includes benefits, training, and reviews which make staff and volunteers feel supported and well equipped for their positions.

Library trustees and staff participated in trainings throughout the year on a variety of topics such as: Summer Reading Program Planning, Marketing in the Library, Mobile Memory Lab, Building Collections to Increase User Engagement, Minecraft for Libraries, and Fundamentals of Human Resources.

Staff and volunteer meetings were held throughout the year to support and educate all concerned as library policies and procedures were updated. All staff, trustees and volunteers completed required Sexual Harassment Prevention Training. All trustees completed required two hours of trustee training throughout the year on a variety of topics.

Director Hadley received a Circle Scholarship for teachers and librarians through the Alumni Association of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle at Chautauqua Institution. With this award, over the next two years she will attend annual writing classes and share what is learned with participants in writing programs at the library.

Goal #5:

By 2029, the Board of Trustees and Library Staff will have carried out a 25- year celebration of our library building.

September 13, 2025 was selected as the date for the 25 Year Anniversary Celebration of the new library building, and planning was begun.

Goal #6:

By 2029, identify future roles of the library and implement any changes.

Patrons are encouraged to provide input regarding future roles of the library.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Provided meeting space for community groups such as the Valley Historical Society, TOPS NY 610, family group meetings, Cemetery Associations, Healthy Community Alliance, Early Childhood Intervention Assessments, Charlotte Center church, Homeschoolers, and tutors with students. Also provided space for individuals for remote job interviews and online classes.

Community Outreach with participation in “Christmas in Sinclairville” event, Gerry’s “Movie with Santa” event, Valley Historical Society’s History Fair, and presentations at the Ross Grange and CVCS board meetings.

Provided Volunteer Income Tax Preparation (VITA) through partnership with the United Way.

Facilitated community discussions on the topic of Accessibility as part of the American Library Association's Libraries Transforming Communities initiative with the goal of making our library materials, programs and services more accessible to the community. Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL).

Family Programs included "Neighborhood Nature" presented by CVCS Science Teacher Corinne Kelly; Paper Pumpkins Craft Night; Hedgehogs Program and Community Night with a Petting Zoo both provided by Sundance Kids Farm; "Makey-Makey program to create a fruit and veggie piano; "It's (Partially) Rocket Science and (Mostly) Ice Cream; Time Out Program for parents; Homeschool Hour, and Telescope Training.

Author Events: Debra Runge Meder with her book The Front Porch Promise; Kathy Carlton Willis speaking on "Top Errors Writers Make and How to Avoid Them;" Deb Pines (Chautauqua Mystery Series) and her new book Caught in the Snare, "Building a Career as a Writer," Generative writing workshops, poetry open mics and "Writing About Nature" with author John Brantingham; "Caleb Mathews Pottery Site, Gerry 1821-1850" with historian and local author Vince Martonis.

Summer Reading Program (with Outreach to Gerry and Sinclairville Recreation Programs, Little Seeds Preschool and The Wrap Childcare Program) 2024 Theme: "Adventure Begins at Your Library." During the months of summer reading, circulation of children's materials increased 63% over the previous year!

Provided digital services assistance both at the library and at the Homestead in Gerry.

Updated technology as needed, including installation of a weatherproof wireless access point and updated internal data wiring to extend wireless reach. E-rate funding was used to fund this project. Four new computers for patron use were purchased with funds granted by the Holmberg Foundation.

Started new early literacy program: Baby Talk for ages birth to two years old with songs, bounces, stories, read-alongs and playtime. This new program is well-attended.

Art Programs: The Art of Flower Pounding, Zentangle, and Nature Study with Brenda Nickerson. Art show with works of Joseph S. Funicello, Donna Trantum, Karyn Okerlund, Sue Harrington and Diana LeClerc. Gardening with Native Plants presented by Pat Martonis of Master Gardeners.

Music Programs: Family Sing Alongs Hand Drumming and Jam Sessions were scheduled throughout the year.

Participated with the Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System's Library Road Trip Summer Adventure Program.

Completed a sidewalk project funded by the American Library Association's Accessibility Grant program to remove curbs for improved handicapped access and heat portions of the sidewalk and book drop area for improved safety during winter months.

Funding from the Pilcrow Foundation's Children's Book Grant Project was used to add \$1200 worth of new books for children to our collection.

The family of Lisa Obert Waite designated memorial funds to be sent to the library for the purpose of installing memorial benches in front of the library. A large bench was placed near the library entrance with an acknowledgment that the bench is in Lisa's memory and "Her Story Endures." Another bench including a statue of a little girl reading a book was placed on the front lawn with landscaping to create a memorial garden area.

Story Walks installed at the Sinclairville Park.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED LIBRARY PROGRAMS:

Family STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) nights with stories and projects.

Book Clubs: In-person, online and outreach to the Homestead in Gerry

Writing groups: Write Circle, Write Spirit, Life Story Writing, Memoir Writing at the Homestead

Sinclairville Samplers: Crafting Together Program

Early Literacy Programs:

Baby Talk ages 0 to 2 and Preschool Story Hour ages 2 to 4

Fly Tying Program

Makerspace: Cabinet full of LEGOS, Marble Run, Craft Kits and supplies made available to children and families. "Take and Make" craft kits provided for children to make projects at home.