

Altamont Free Library 2023 Annual Report

The 2023 Altamont Free Library Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of Former AFL Trustees Mary Hughes and Jean Hungerford Krull and to Ruth Anne Burby

Mission

The Altamont Free Library is a state, town and village funded association library, which provides for the informational, cultural, educational and recreational needs of patrons living within the stated area of the Library charter. To this end, the Library provides print and non-print materials, interlibrary loan, reference services, and programs to its users.

Trustees

President: Deborah Marion Katz

Vice President: Shannon Duerr

Secretary: Katherine Nelson

Treasurer: Tracy Mayer

Assistant Treasurer: Paul Scilipoti

Trustees: Amanda Beedle, Katie Barker, Christine Carpenter, Raelee Grimm, Jeff Perlee, Rebecca Stumpf

Library Staff

Library Director: Joe Burke

Library Assistants: Lauren Boudi, Ann Gainer (departed in September 2023), Erika Peterson, Bradley Towle (departed in January 2023), Meg Seinberg-Hughes

Maintenance: Claudia LeClair

Bookkeeper: Jason Cooper

Significant Events & Programs

- Held the first *I Love My Library* Gala since February 2020, which raised over \$25,000 for AFL and introduced a new location and format for the event.
- From April to August, we received 1,269 visitors participating in the Upper Hudson Library Expedition. Among all 36 locations in UHLS, we received the 7th most visits, the most of any small library, and more than any medium sized library besides Voorheesville. AFL was widely reported to be among participant's favorite libraries.
- Held the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony for the new *Dick & Ellen Howie Community Patio*. The dedication was attended by over one hundred guests including Town Supervisor Barber and Assemblymember Fahy, in addition to the guest of honor, Ellen Howie.
- In April, we completed work our new Long Range Plan of Service, whose goals and objectives we will work towards fulfilling through 2026.
- Throughout the year, Joe (with the invaluable assistance of Katie Barker) gave presentations about our Summer Reading Buddies Program, which included statewide conference and webinar presentations and national publications. As a result, SRB programs have cropped up in multiple locations throughout New York State and as far away as Henderson, North Carolina and Centerville, Indiana. Our own SRB program expanded to include a partnership with Guilderland Public Library and every elementary school in GCSD.

- Joe also presented a nationwide webinar through the Library Skills Academy on the subject of the *The Community and Your Library*, with participants as far away as Alaska.
- Resumed in-person Storytimes at AFL for the first time since 2020 after holding them in Orsini Park in warm months and Altamont Reformed Church in cold months since 2021.
- We also said goodbye to our long-time Storytime performer Ann Gainer and introduced a new one in Meg Seiberger-Hughes. Attendance at Storytimes has notably increased since the change was made.
- We brought on a new Library Assistant, Lauren Boudi.
- Erika Peterson revamped her monthly nighttime Storytime program, now renamed *Stories & Stuffies*, which has been very popular.
- We partnered with Guilderland Public Library to present several programs, including film screenings and the UHLS spelling bee tournament. We also resumed our popular rotating selection of board games from GPL's extensive collection.
- We participated in several community events, including marching in the Memorial Day Parade and assisting with ACT's annual fall and winter festivals, and their springtime Strawberry Social.
- We held some of our largest summer concerts ever, and developed a new rain-location partner in Allied Brewing Company.
- Organized our third annual StoryWalk in Schilling Park.
- Substantially increased our municipal appropriation from the Town of Guilderland.
- Between the Gala and a successful May book sale and December Library Lights fundraiser, along with substantial gifts and donations, we raised just over \$50,000 in private giving.
- Finally, we had several of our highest circulation months ever, culminating in what was—in all likelihood—our highest circulation year in our library's 107-year history.

Circulation, Membership, and Collection

Please see the attached spreadsheets for additional details.

In 2023, Altamont Free Library lent out 25,011 physical items and 9,649 downloadable ebooks and audiobooks for a total circulation of 34,660. This was our highest overall annual circulation in the past ten years. In all likelihood, it was our highest annual circulation ever, driven largely by our rapidly increasing digital circulation.

Circulation of printed materials (ie. books in all age categories) represented a steady 60% of our circulation total. Children's books made up a 10-year (and probably all-time) high of 29% of our total circulation. Meanwhile, circulation of DVD's and CD audiobooks are at their lowest point ever, representing just 12% of our total circulation, down from a high of 28% in 2018.

Over-the-counter circulation was up by 9% compared to 2022, and our digital circulation increased by 16% over 2022. Combined digital and over-the-counter circulation was up by 11% compared to 2022.

Compared to a pre-pandemic three-year average of circulation from 2017 to 2019, circulation of physical items was down by 5%. Combined digital and over-the-counter circulation was up by 14% compared to the pre-pandemic average.

Over the course of 2022, Altamont Free Library added 114 new library members, for an overall total of 2,280 patrons, of whom 425 have an item checked out as of 1/10/2024.

Throughout the year, we added 573 new items to our collection and withdrew 610 for a year-end total collection of 13,318 items.

Social Media Outreach

In 2023, we significantly expanded our social media reach significantly, with 245 new Facebook followers for a total 1,409. We've also gained 92 Instagram followers in 2023 for a total of 473.

Throughout the year, we put out 143 FB/Insta posts and a handful of additional FB-only posts, an all-time high for us.

Mid-year, we briefly flirted with the new Threads platform, but that fizzled pretty quickly. We did however gain 63 followers on that platform in case we ever want to reengage with it. In 2023, we did not use Twitter/X because it is terrible.

Finances

Primary sources of income were: Town of Guilderland: \$70,000; Village of Altamont: \$59,000; Town of Knox, \$9,000; Fundraisers: \$29,656; Gifts & Donations: \$20,740; Fines & Fees: \$2,428; Program Revenue: \$2,598; State Aid: \$1,436; Interest from CD's: \$8,117.

Copies of the full budget are available at the Library.

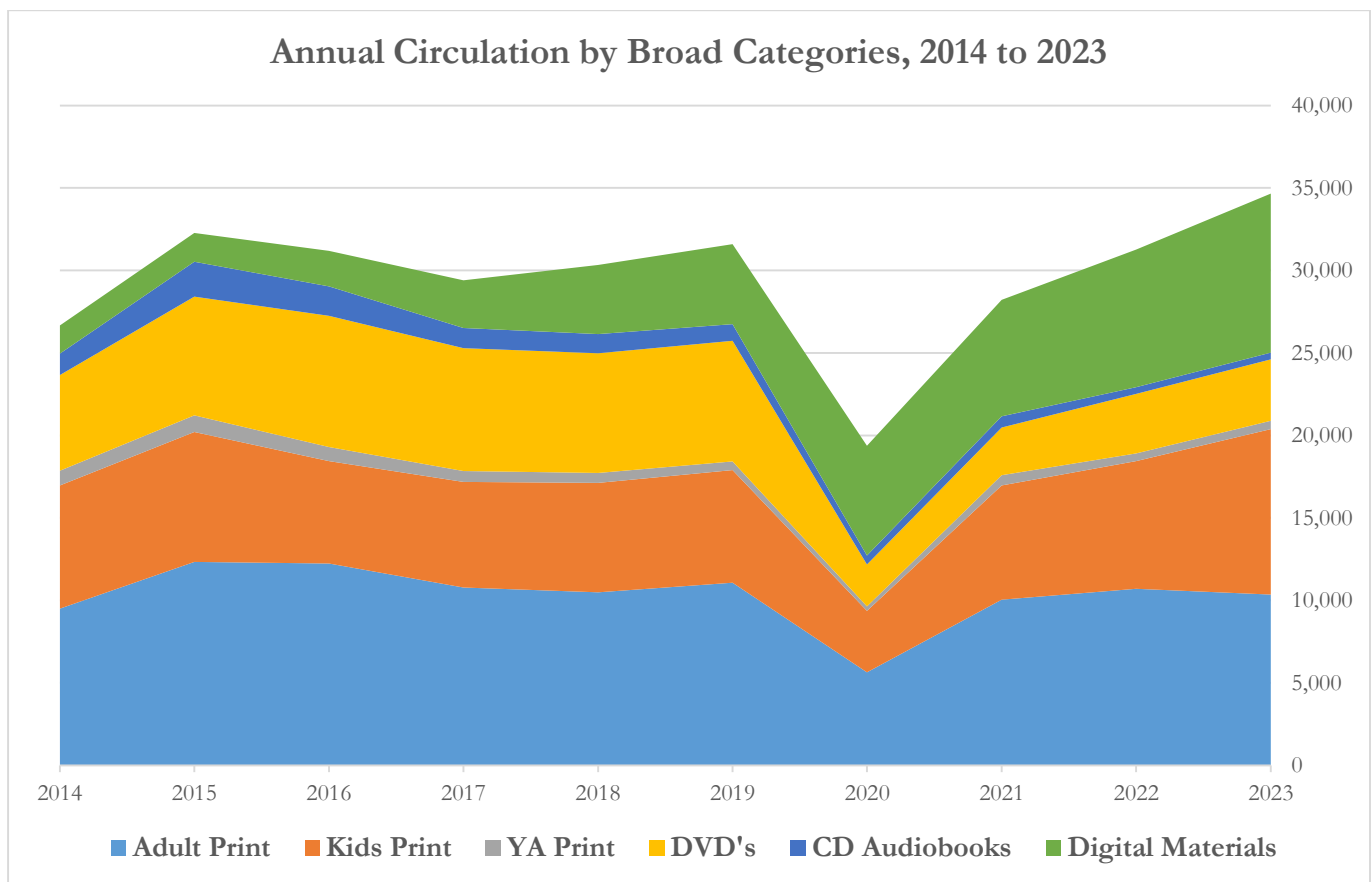
Annual Circulation by Selected Categories, 2018 to 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Adult Fiction	6,908	7,201	6,483	3,799	7,256	6,819
Adult Nonfiction	3,086	3,100	3,043	1,696	3,266	3,171
Juvenile Fiction	8,741	6,883	6,062	3,195	5,789	5,616
Juvenile Nonfiction	1,297	872	860	523	1,038	1,012
YA Fiction	472	439	575	256	449	566
Adult & Kids DVDs	3,715	3,610	2,893	2,542	7,321	7,264
CD Audiobooks	413	406	675	539	1,066	1,153
Digital Materials	9,643	8,339	7,066	6,662	4,844	4,201
Total Circulation	34,654	31,269	28,216	19,374	31,592	30,339

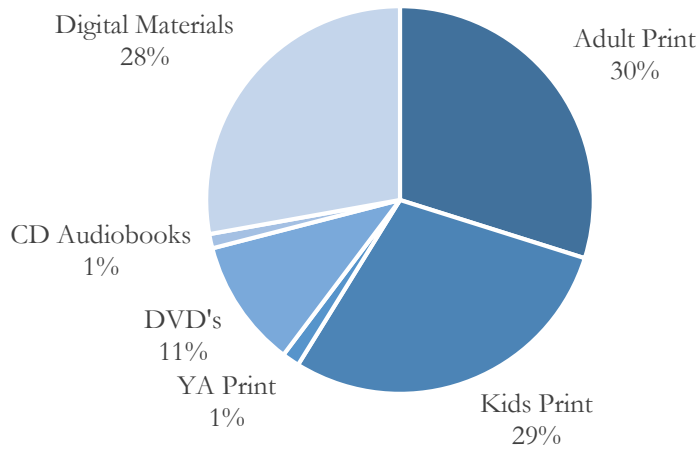
2023 Circulation by Month Compared to Pre-Pandemic Average

Month	2023 Circulation			2022 Circulation			2017-2019 Averages			2022 δ from Avg.	2023 δ from Avg.
	Physical	Digital	Total	Physical	Digital	Total	Physical	Digital	Total		
January	1,915	748	2,663	1,630	775	2,405	2,153	295	2,448	-1.8%	8.4%
February	1,792	728	2,520	1,695	617	2,312	2,006	283	2,289	-1.0%	9.6%
March	2,184	820	2,941	2,179	746	2,925	2,231	205	2,436	20.0%	18.8%
April	1,935	717	2,652	1,970	736	2,706	2,182	296	2,478	9.2%	6.8%
May	2,106	774	2,880	1,608	739	2,347	2,154	325	2,479	-5.3%	15.0%
June	2,197	805	3,002	1,972	674	2,646	2,334	355	2,689	-1.6%	11.0%
July	2,562	803	3,365	2,314	719	3,033	2,613	343	2,956	2.6%	13.0
August	2,864	806	3,670	2,316	707	3,023	2,688	369	3,057	-1.1%	18.2%
September	2,143	839	2,982	1,813	654	2,467	2,046	333	2,379	3.7%	22.5%
October	1,971	891	2,862	1,849	651	2,500	2,213	354	2,567	-2.6%	10.9%
November	1,669	878	2,547	1,789	676	2,465	2,014	331	2,345	5.1%	8.3%
December	1,673	840	2,513	1,795	645	2,440	1,819	336	2,155	13.2%	15.3%
Total	25,011	9,649	34,597	22,930	8,339	31,269	26,453	3,825	30,278	3.3%	13.3%

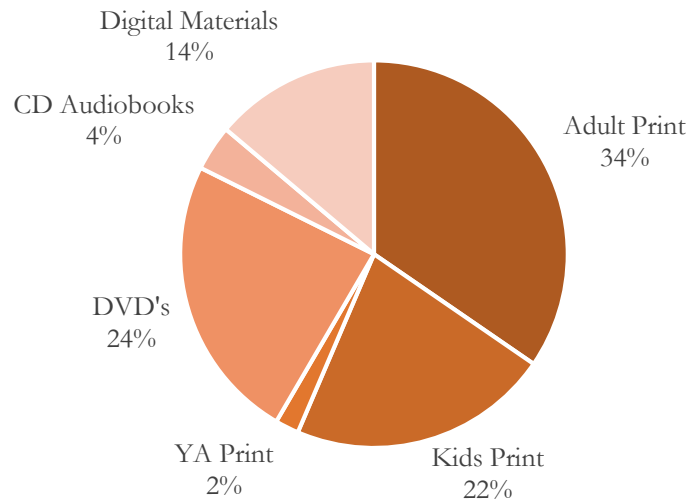
Annual Circulation by Broad Categories, 2014 to 2023



Annual Circulation by Broad Categories, 2023



Annual Circulation by Broad Categories, 2018



Annual Circulation by Broad Categories, 2014

