



Wayne Greco - Board Chair

Year in Review: A Message from the Board Chair

Dear Patrons and Supporters of Sault Ste. Marie Public Library,

As we close the chapter on 2023, we take a moment to reflect on the journey we've shared and the milestones we've achieved at the Library. Here are five highlights:

Community Engagement: We hosted numerous engaging events and programs throughout the year, bringing our community together to learn, create, and connect.

Digital Expansion: Our online collection of e-books, audiobooks, and digital resources saw significant growth, providing patrons with convenient access to a wealth of knowledge from the comfort of their homes.

Volunteer Contributions: The dedication and commitment of our volunteers enriched our programs and services, enhancing the library experience for all patrons.

Partnerships: Collaborating with local schools, organizations, and businesses, we expanded our reach and impact, enriching our programs and services through shared expertise and resources.

Completion and Implementation of the Strategic Plan: We completed and began implementing our strategic plan, guiding our efforts and ensuring alignment with our long-term goals and objectives.

As we look forward to 2024, we remain committed to serving our community with passion and innovation. Thank you for your continued support and participation in making the Library a vibrant center for learning and discovery.

Warm regards,

Wayne Greco - Chair, Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023

Paolo Bruni

Hannah Caicco

Lisa Dobrovnik

Wayne Greco (Chair)

Erin Ferlaino

Jami van Haaften

Kevin Harrison

Steve Murray

Mike Olejnik (Vice Chair)



Thank you

To our generous 2023 Donors

PLATINUM
\$50,000

GOLD
\$5,000-\$49,999

SILVER
\$2,500-\$4,999

FMI Elliott Foundation

BRONZE
\$1,000-\$2,499

Howard Bennett
In Memory of Norm Rippon
Robert Cohen
Kiwanis Club of Sault Ste. Marie
Len Scramstad

COPPER
\$500-\$999

Mary Coventry
Jane Forth
Kiwanis Club of Lakeshore
Zonta Club

How Donations Are Being Used

Zonta Club - Dove Real Beauty and Toddler Time



3
Sessions
58
Participants

The Dove Real Beauty workshop is a fun, educational and interactive program for young girls ages 6-12 and their adult female mentors that encourages girls and women everywhere to embrace a more positive image of themselves, both inside and out.



Running
18 weeks
369
Caregivers
& Toddlers
Attended

Toddler Time is a fun, 45-minute program designed for toddlers and their caregivers. This program encourages and supports learning through stories, songs, art, and play.

Kiwanis Club of Lakeshore - Lego My Library



43
programs
837
participants

This program features a different LEGO building challenge each week, as well as time for free building.



In Memory of
Norman Rippon
Books &
Programming
Supporting
Children's
Literacy



NOHLA - Spanish/Portuguese Programming

Thanks to our partnership with Northern Ontario Latin Hispanic Association, we are able to host their organization to facilitate language classes.

Spanish
Classes
3 sessions
19 weeks
144
Participants

Portuguese
Classes
3 sessions
20 weeks
45
Participants

Kiwanis Club of Sault Ste. Marie Baby Time

Designed for the youngest library users and their parents or caregivers, Baby Time is a great way to introduce young children to the library, to begin a love of books and to help children develop into lifelong learners. This 30 minute program is for caregivers of babies aged 0 to 12 months.



2 sessions
12 weeks
324
Participants

Staff Changes

Welcome! Rebekah Verdone



We welcomed Rebekah Verdone to the Library in November 2023 as the new Administrative Clerk.

Rebekah has a Bachelor of English Literature (Honours) from Algoma University (2007) and an Executive Diploma in Office Administration from Sault College (2012) and has been a loyal patron of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library for 20 years.



The Library
employs
50
people!

Congratulations! Kaitrin Aaltonen

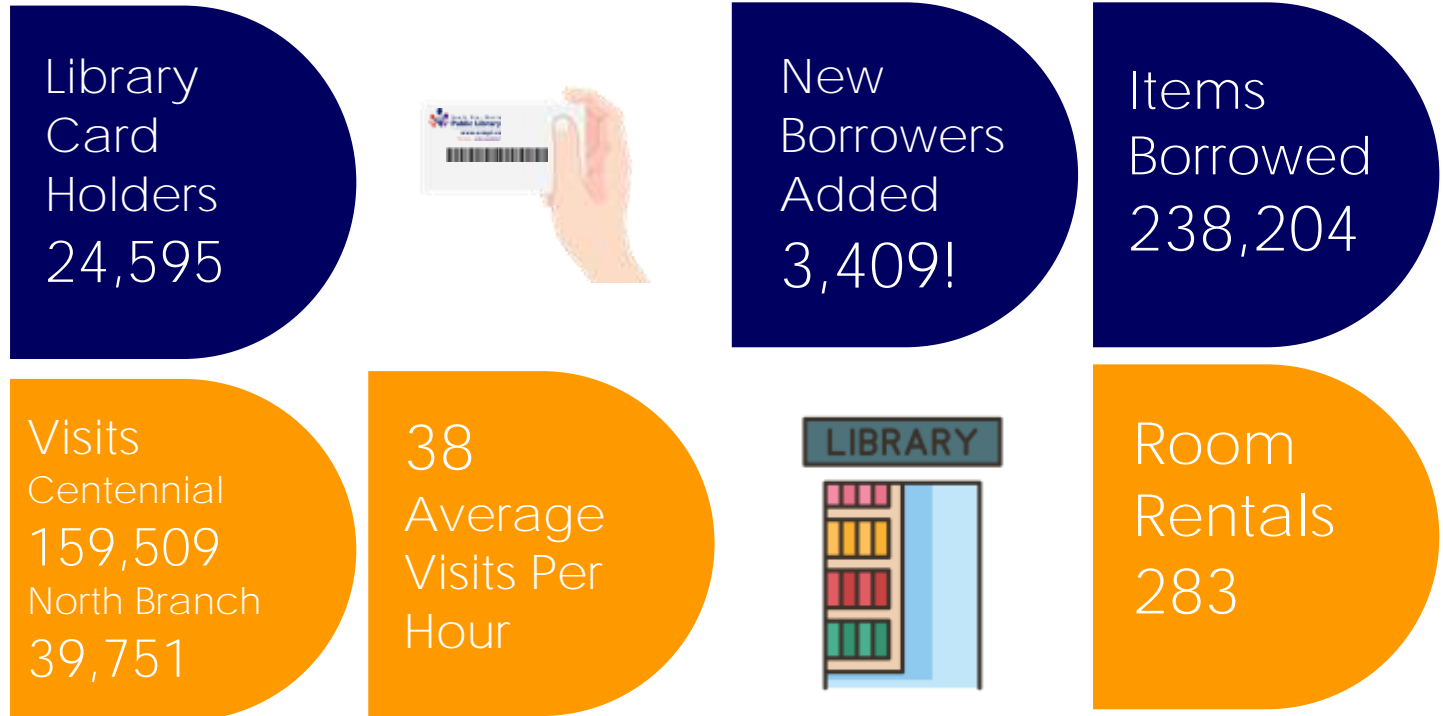
The Library is excited to congratulate Kaitrin Aaltonen as the new Business Administrator.

Previously serving as the Administrative Clerk, she took over the position in June of 2023. Kaitrin holds a degree in Business Administration from Laurentian University and has extensive prior experience in health and safety. Please join us in welcoming Kaitrin to her new position!

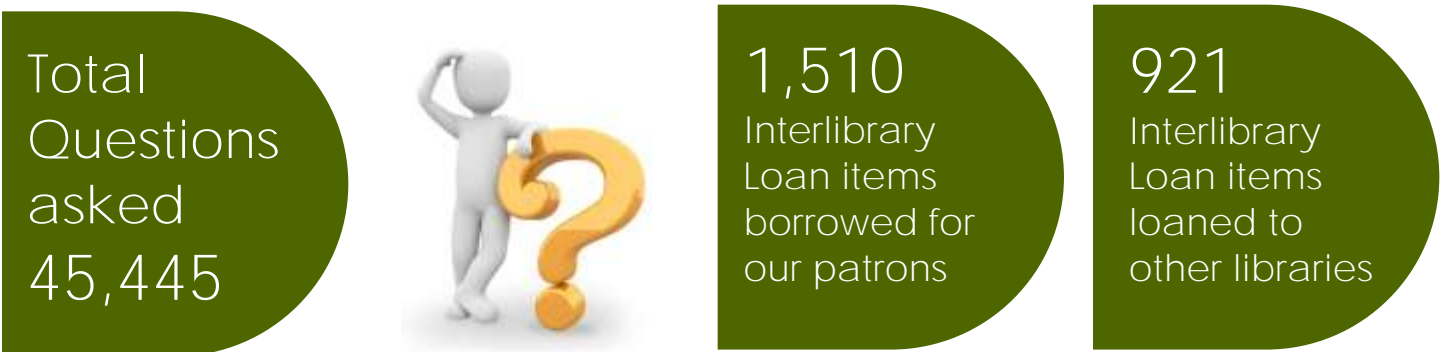


Our Year at a Glance

Public Services



On average, each library user borrowed more than 12 books.

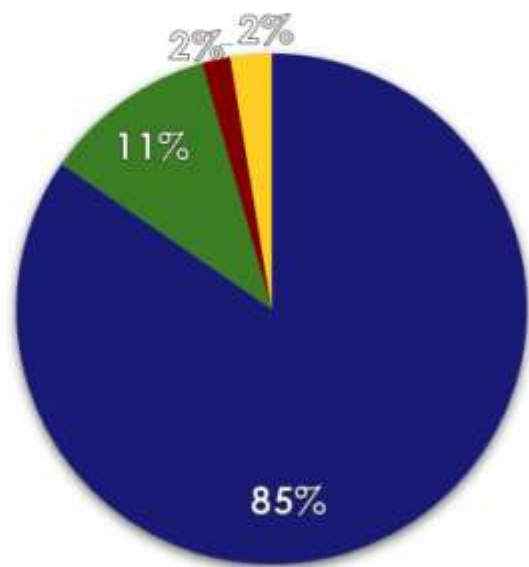


Social Media



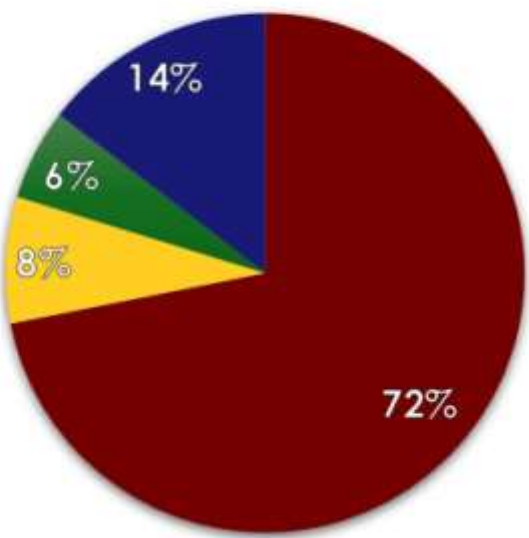
Financial Management

Where the money comes from



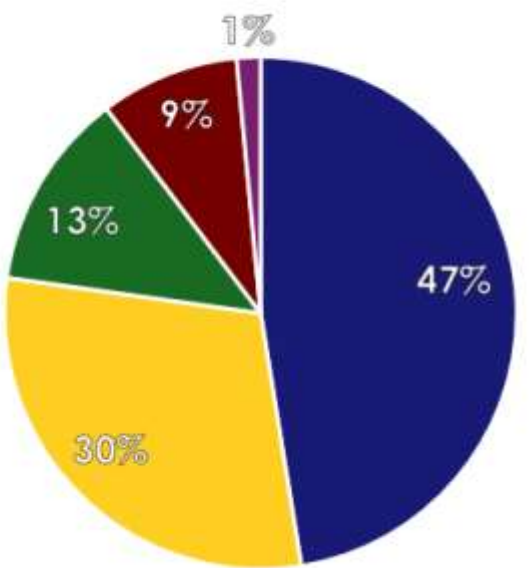
- 85% City of Sault Ste. Marie
- 11% Ontario Government
- 2% Grants & Donations
- 2% Self-Generated

Where the money goes



- 72% Salaries and benefits
- 8% Collections
- 6% Office expenditures
- 14% Building Related

Collection expenditures



- 47% Books
- 30% E-Resources (E-books & Downloads)
- 13% Multimedia (DVDS & Audiobook)
- 9% Periodicals (Magazines & Newspapers)
- 1% Other (Object Library, Build Box, etc)

Top Trends 2023

JUVENILE

Top Picture Books

- 1. The Day the Crayons Quit - Drew Daywalt
- 2. Pete the Cat and his Four Groovy Buttons - Eric Litwin
- 3. I Love My White Shoes - Eric Litwin

Easy Reader

- 1. Thea Stilton and the Mystery in Paris - Thea Stilton
- 2. The Kingdom of Fantasy - Geronimo Stilton
- 3. The Wildwood Maker #7 - Rebecca Elliott

Juvenile Fiction

- 1. Diary of a Wimpy Kid #9: The Long Haul - Jeff Kinney
- 2. Diary of a Wimpy Kid #12: The Getaway - Jeff Kinney
- 3. Diary of Wimpy Kid #14 : Wrecking Ball - Jeff Kinney



YOUNG ADULT Fiction

- 1. The Hunger Games - Suzanne Collins
- 2. The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes - Suzanne Collins
- 3. A Good Girl's Guide to Murder - Holly Jackson

ADULT

Fiction

- 1. The 6:20 Man - David Baldacci
- 2. Long Shadows - David Baldacci
- 3. Desert Star - Michael Connelly

Non-Fiction

- 1. Freezing Order: a story of Laundering, Murder and Surviving Vladimir Putin's Wrath - Bill Browder
- 2. Educated: a Memoir - Tara Westover
- 3. Spare - Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex



DVDS

- 1. Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom
- 2. The Next Three Days
- 3. Sonic the Hedgehog; 2

Our Year at a Glance

Electronic Resources



Overdrive/
Libby
Audiobooks
Borrowed
27,795

Overdrive/
Libby
eBooks
Borrowed
56,426

Overdrive/
Libby
Magazines
Borrowed
13,664



Hoopla
Audiobooks
Borrowed
2,180

Hoopla
eBooks
& Comics
Borrowed
1,773

Hoopla Media
971
(including movies,
music and television
programs)

Total Overdrive/Libby and Hoopla Circulation **96,825**

Public
Computer
Bookings
10,862



Wi-Fi
Sessions
41,310

Library Online
Catalogue
Page Views
1,172,388

Library Website
Page Views
324,853

Social
Media
Impressions
296,822

Database
Searches
12,743



Spotlight on Programming

Boomers & Beyond: Back to the 50's

Boomers & Beyond "Back to the 50s" themed event was a huge success as we welcomed those ages 55 and over to join us at the Library on June 14, 2023. With 66 attendees and 7 community partners, we had a blast playing trivia, enjoying Pulla, and crafting activities by Anna Lefave, while meeting with a variety of booths for information, activities, services, and programs for retired adults.

Total Number
of Programs
(In-House, Passive,
Contests)
517
Participation
26,358



Total Number
of Outreach
Programs
28
Attendance
1,515



The Library partnered with CMHA Algoma in 2023 to provide Mental Health Consultations to the public. The goal was to raise awareness of mental health services in the community and get those in need connected to the right program for them. The Library has also partnered with St. John's Ambulance Therapy Dog, Zumi, to offer comfort to patrons attending the library. With 2 visits in 2023, Zumi has had 58 visitors stop by for a comforting pet and snuggle. We are excited to have Zumi continuing to attend the Library in 2024!



Authorpalooza

This year the event was hosted in a hybrid format, celebrating authors in-house and online. 14 local authors participated in the event on Thursday, October 19, 2023. This year's event included not only authors, but other professionals in the book publishing industry. 200 people were in attendance throughout the day-long event. 3 local authors spoke about their books, writing process and more in short video segments. These videos were shared on the SSMPL social media outlets throughout Ontario Public Library Week. The Author Palooza videos generated 156 views on the SSMPL YouTube channel.



Volunteers



2023 was a great year for the Friends of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library. We are celebrating our many successes, financial and otherwise.

When I became the President of the Friends eight years ago, my goal was to make more money for the Library and make the Friends Bookstore a great place to volunteer.

During the past year, about forty volunteers worked approximately 6,500 hours to make over \$40,000 for our library, surpassing our goal for the year.

"The Crew", as our Board Chair refers to us, love our volunteers jobs. "A labour of love", "a pleasure to spend time at the Bookstore" are the phrases we hear all the time.



Over
\$40K in
Sales!

At \$1.00 per book we offer affordable reading to all and if we can't sell the books, we give them away.

Sault Area Hospital, the YMCA, the Youth Wellness Hub, Garden River Library, the Windsor Park Retirement Home, and the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Museum are just some of the recipients of books from the Friends.

In these ways and many others we promote literacy in the Sault area.

Also, this fall our Little Free Library was installed in the new Biodiversity Garden by city workers and is proving very popular. We stock it several times a week.



The Friends are also celebrating our big renovation completed in September. With new flooring and accessible pathways, it gave us all quite a boost and has improved the Bookstore in every way.

I would like to thank Matthew MacDonald, CEO, all the Library staff, and Board members for their help and support.

Here's to the continued success of the Friends of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library.

Sue Hall, President of Friends of the Library

The Library had a variety of fantastic volunteers for 2023.

Friends of the
Library
Over 40
Volunteers
Contributed over
6,500 Hours

Between-branch
Deliveries
4 Couriers
Contributed
105 Hours

Visiting
Library
Service
30
Volunteer
Hours



Archives

LIVING HISTORY
ALGOMA

ORAL HISTORIES

The Oral History of Sault Ste. Marie contributed seven new oral histories to the archive collection in 2023. Two of the Oral Histories are part of the Life in the Arts Collection. This specific collection consists of individuals who have contributed to the arts in Sault Ste. Marie, who include: Kenneth Franklin Anstice and Albert Fred Kent (Fred Kent), Joseph Edwin Keith Mackay (Keith Mackay), William Samuel Eaton, (Bill Eaton), Raymond Howard Joseph Mador (Ray Mador), John Randall McDonald (Randy McDonald) which are all in the same interview. The other Oral History Collection was the COVID-19 Pandemic series, which highlighted various experiences of individuals through the pandemic. These interviews were of Paul Schaer, Erin Kristine Cistaro, Kathy Fisher, Mowafak Bahri, Maram Mahfoud and Denine Williams. To view these videos scan the barcode.



Archive Donations

Posters from the
Algoma Art Society's
Art & Craft Shows

2 framed prints
of the Edmund
Fitzgerald

Lakeway Tech
memorabilia from
the Sault Ste. Marie
Museum

ARCHIVES OPEN HOUSE

On November 24, 2023, the Library facilitated an Archive Tour event. The event allowed members of the public to tour and view the archive facilities at the North Branch Library. The Library Archives Technician conducted tours every hour between the times of 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The attendees were given a tour of the archive viewing room, clean room and the archive storage room. Patrons were also introduced to different types of equipment and procedures used in the archive field. 23 individuals from the public attended the event.



7
New Oral
Histories
Added

New
Material
Added
1,205
Items

Spotlight on Programming



Virtual
Programs
4 Videos
Total Views
220

LIP Paint Night
The Library partnered with the Local Immigration Partnership to host a Paint Night for 16 new community members. Attendees enjoyed a guided tour of painting beautiful scenery while enjoying and learning more about their local library.



Family Literacy Night with the Soo Greyhounds
On January 24, 2024, the Library collaborated with members of the Ontario Hockey League's Soo Greyhounds to commemorate Family Literacy Day. This cherished event, held annually, draws numerous community members eager to meet their hockey heroes while participating in the festivities of Literacy Day. The day featured a range of activities, including games, crafts, and prize opportunities. Notably, the event attracted 154 attendees, further highlighting its popularity and significance within the community.

Total Number
of Storytimes
129
Combined
Attendance
2,493



Chess Club
The North Branch staff proudly manages the Chess Club, which convenes on Tuesday evenings from 5 to 7:30 pm. This initiative is spearheaded by the committed volunteer, Jeremy Paquin, who has diligently overseen 33 Chess Club sessions, dedicating over 49.5 hours of his time to enrich the Sault community with the joys of chess. Remarkably, in 2023, the program boasted an impressive 387 participants, showcasing its significant impact and popularity within the community.



Book Clubs
Facilitated
36
Total
Participants
226

Grand Total
of Programs
1,735
Grand Total
Attendance
176,971

Community

The Library held a Membership Drive from September 1, 2023 to October 3, 2023 with an incentive to win a \$200 gift card generously donated by Station Mall. After attending 15 different venues to promote the library and it's free services to the community and indigenous people residing in Ontario, we had the following results:

671
New
Members!



323 Adults
53 Senior
100 Aged 13-19
178 Aged 12 & under
17 'Other'

Some of the events and locations visited for the Membership Drive included:

- Bushplane Days
- Newcomer Fair
- Sault College
- Algoma University
- Garden River First Nation
- Prince Charles Secondary School
- Grocery Stores
- ICA Student Cafe
- Greyhound Game



Community Leader Award – Presented by Northern Ontario Latin Hispanic Association

The Library was awarded 'Community Leader' by the Northern Ontario Latin Hispanic Association (NOLHA) for 2023. The Library has worked with NOLHA for a decade collaborating for language classes such as Portuguese and Spanish, as well as large-scale festivities such as Culture Days. This award was to recognize the collaboration and strong partnership the Library has with the organization.



Community

Illuminate the Season

The Circulation Team decorated and donated a 'Red Cardinal' themed tree for Illuminate the Season that sold for \$324.00!



Hygiene Drive

Recognizing our community's need for hygiene products, the Library ran a drive which raised thousands of items that were donated to community resource centers, shelters, and social service agencies.

Giving Tree

The Library brought together the community to donate winter accessories to 'keep our community warm this year'. With hundreds of items donated and taken from the tree, we can confidently know that many people were kept a bit warmer during these colder winter months.



CULTURE DAYS

TOP PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES IN 2023

1. Oakville, ON
2. Town of Halton Hills, ON
3. Richmond, BC
4. Milton, ON
5. Vaughan, ON
6. St. Catharines, ON
7. Waterloo, ON
8. North Vancouver, BC
9. Sault Ste. Marie, ON
10. Cambridge, ON
10. Thunder Bay, ON

Mid-size Cities

The Library is proud to be a part of the Cultural Corridor Committee that partners with many organizations to provide accessible programming and events to the community. We are thrilled to once again have Sault Ste. Marie in the Top 10 Participating Communities for Ontario Culture Days!