DEAR STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder? Yes! When it comes to the public library, everyone in the community has a stake. Thank you for taking the time to review the progress of our mutual investment over the past year, and for your continuing input and support.

Eau Claire is a city focused on providing exceptional quality of life and services. In the heart of downtown, where expansion and renewal are thriving, the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library is committed to meeting the needs of this burgeoning community. The library defines and structures its service goals using a five-year strategic plan. The current plan (2016–2021) has provided the structure and accountability necessary for truly transformational progress in 2018.

Just a little over one year ago, the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library took a bold step to remove barriers to accessing library materials. The library eliminated overdue fines on nearly all materials, and waived existing fines. When the new policy took effect in January of 2018, check out privileges were reinstated for 5,232 cardholders. Nearly 1,100 of those cardholders were children. In the past year, the library has been a model for other local libraries in adopting a more equitable service model so that all customers feel comfortable using the public library.

Meanwhile, library staff have continued to gain momentum in other key areas to sustain and expand the library’s role as a trusted community resource. In the following pages you will find details about the improved outreach, enhanced programming, community involvement, and rejuvenated collections that were implemented this year.

That kind of tangible momentum shines a light on the conditions of our current library facilities: the lack of flexible programming space, outdated structural systems, and major challenges of accessibility, safety, and sustainability. All of these issues can be resolved through community participation and careful planning of the proposed renovation and expansion project.

The library’s proposed building plans will meet the needs of current usage as well as future growth. As a library customer, when you spread the word about the library’s amazing resources, it’s our most effective public service message. Right now there is all the more reason to embrace your role as an ambassador. This exciting plan is a big lift to our community, so let’s get busy! To learn more and to stay informed as the project moves forward, visit ecpubliclibrary.info/building.

Pamela K. Westby
Library Director
# Acting on Our Values

As a practical tool, the library’s Board of Trustees and management team have designed a comprehensive strategic plan. First, they identified the library’s core values and determined a list of service goals founded on those values. Next, they developed a checklist of specific initiatives to support each goal. The library’s strategic plan is a living document that evolves as the needs of our customers and community change. The core values are: access, intellectual freedom, privacy, stewardship, collaboration, and service. Progress from 2016 through 2018 follows.

1. **Provide the best user experience possible.**
   - Fines-free policy.
   - Waived fines.
   - Self-checkout.
   - Assessed organizational structure.
   - Color copier & printer.
   - Reduced wait times.
   - Improved customer feedback process.
   - Specialty tools added to collection.
   - Device chargers.
   - Evaluated service hours.

2. **Optimize library spaces to better serve community needs.**
   - Building Feasibility Study & Space Needs Analysis.
   - Reallocating existing space.
   - Small group meeting spaces.
   - Comfortable seating.

3. **Foster a culture of creativity and innovation.**
   - Launched Dabble Box makerspace (2016).
   - Enhanced & diversified DIY programming.
   - Periodic performances in library.
   - Musical instruments & STEM kits added to the collection.
   - Increased access to technology training.
   - Broadened scope of programs.

4. **Engage customers through community-based services and partnerships.**
   - BookBike (2016).
   - Outreach at YMCA.
   - Chippewa Valley Learning in Retirement.
   - “Talking is Teaching.”
   - Daycare & school visits.
   - Mayo Clinic Health System’s “Strong Bodies.”

5. **Raise awareness of how the library contributes to the quality of life in the community.**
   - Presence at community events.
   - Instagram presence.
   - Exterior LED message board.
   - Translated applications & customer brochures to Spanish & Hmong.
   - Branding campaign.
   - Promoted services as well as programs.
   - Subscriber-based email updates to over 14,000.
   - Videos to promote Books on Buses & self-checkout.
   - Added dynamic translation to website.

6. **Develop a transparent and sustainable budget that grows to reflect the community.**
   - Updated and annually reviewing the County Library Agreement.

To read the detailed strategic plan and see progress reports as they become available, please visit ecpubliclibrary.info/mission.

---

**Our Mission**

The library promotes lifelong learning, creates collaborative spaces, and supports open access to diverse materials and resources to enhance the quality of life in the community.
PEOPLE FIRST
Inclusion and access are founding principles of public libraries. Here in Eau Claire, we work hard to put those principles into action.

- Existing late fees waived.
- Late fees on most items eliminated.
- BookBike trailer increased visits by 33%.
- Dabble Box outreach increased.
- Purchased Braille printer for public use, and a beep ball kit to check out.
- Card applications translated into Hmong and Spanish.
- Family Conversation Kits added to help start discussions on diversity topics.
- “Culture Quest” youth programs and workshops with award-winning author Mitali Perkins explored different cultures.
- Every first grader in the school district welcomed to the library.
- Baby Bonanza event raised awareness of free local support services.
- Increased outreach visits to youth.
- Visited 5,400 kids and teens to promote the summer reading program.
- “1,000 Books Before Kindergarten” program helped families prepare kids for school.
- Served over 305,191 visits on our website with over 629,531 pages viewed.
- “One Book, One Community” reading program encouraged community discussion.
LIFELONG LEARNING

As a primary local provider of no-cost lifelong learning opportunities, the library has improved the scope and relevancy of its offerings.

- New curated collections.
- Improved browse-ability.
- Non-traditional materials like sound and video kits added.
- Program attendance rose over 20%.
- Dabble Box makerspace growth:
  - 3,903 visitors during open labs.
  - “Make & Take” monthly crafting opportunities for adults.
  - Well-known local artist Barbara Shafer presented workshop.
  - Hosted summer technology classes for youth.
- Diverse programs offered to adults:
  - “Beyond the Headlines”
  - “Strong Bodies”
  - “The Paradox of Being a Black Police Officer in Today’s Society”
  - “More than Meth: A Town Hall Meeting”
  - “Adverse Childhood Experiences: Translating Evidence into Action”
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

One of the library’s core values is stewardship. The responsible use of taxpayer dollars is a duty we take seriously. The library actively pursues other sources of funding to provide additional services.

L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library Endowment Fund—Interest and income from this fund enable extraordinary projects. Learn more at ecpubliclibrary.info/give.

2018 Expenditures: $9,900 for exterior LED message board; $7,000 for local art prints; $2,700 for BookBike trailer; $2,000 for the Dabble Box; $700 for Sawdust City Sounds local music service.

Friends of the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library—For 30 years the Friends have supported the library through fundraising and volunteer efforts. Learn more at ecpubliclibrary.info/friends.

2018 Expenditures: $9,100 for exterior LED message board; $2,000 for prizes and giveaways; $1,200 for Play & Learn; $1,000 for the Dabble Box; $750 for “One Book, One Community” program; $750 for Books on Buses; $700 for the Chippewa Valley Book Festival; $700 for activity backpacks; $500 for Nintendo Switch.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)—IMLS administers the Library Services and Technology Act. Learn more at imls.gov.

2018 Grants: $4,425 “Connect and Create: Students as Creators” grant to the library and the Eau Claire Area School District (ECASD) for sound and video recording kits; $2,674 “Connect and Create: Students as Community Members” grant to the library and ECASD for “Culture Quest” and Mitali Perkins programs.

DONORS

Linda Aaseng  
Sharat & Arundhathi Ahluwalia  
John & Kathleen Anderson  
Anonymous  
Dr. Louis G. Arnold  
Mark Attermeier  
Lopamudra & Sandeep Basu  
Sarah Blockhus  
Don & Kim Bodeau  
James & Marilyn Bollinger  
Paul Bowman  
Susan Bruce  
Michael & Carolyn Carlson  
Monica Caron  
David & Eileen Cattau  
Michael & Laura Cohen  
Carlyn Conway  
Maria DeMark  
Lucille Dufeck  
Eau Claire Community Foundation  
Robert & Melissa Eierman  
Mary & Kenneth Foote  
Herman Genrich  
Dorothy Gilbertson  
Bradley Grewe & Melissa Marjamaa  
Sarah Harder  
Mary Harmon  
Richard & Patricia Horecki  
Ralph & Peggie Hudson  
Sue Janke  
Brenda & Steven Johnson  
Jack & Sally Kaiser  
Paul Kaldjian & Meg Nord  
Brian & Mildred Larson  
Irene & Paulis Lazda  
Kae Lieberman  
Tom & Shannon Luepke  
Lawrence & Claire Martin  
Deb & Dennis Mathson  
Lucie McGee  
Chris Meeks  
Rick & Carol Olson  
Kathy Prentice  
Presto Foundation  
Jack & Margaret Quaid  
Freeman Raehl Family  
Tilt & Ann Raid  
Arwen Rasmussen  
Jodi Ritsch  
Mary L. Rosolack  
Dave & Sue Rowe  
Jane Schley  
Diane Schulz Fritz  
Larry & Linda Stelter  
Patricia Stoffers  
John Stoneberg  
John & Libby Stupak  
Cheryl Sutter  
Dean & Denise Tabor  
William & Barbara Thiel  
Michael Turner  
Peter & Jo Mossburg Walters  
Sally A. Webb PhD.  
Jeri Weiser

In Honor Of: The following donors gave $100 or more: Catherine Court; Patricia Ellenson; Alan & Karen Lowry; Sam & Patti Barby; Presto Foundation; Donna Bauer; Herman Genrich; Vicki Hoehn; John Kinney.
## 2018 LEADERSHIP

**Library Board**
- Robert J. Eierman, President
- Rob Reid, Vice President
- Linda Stelter, Secretary
- Sara Antonson
- Sarah M. Harless
- Nancy Lynch
- James Martin
- Michael Xiong

**Senior Staff**
- Pamela Westby, Library Director
- Kimberly Hennings, Assistant Director
- Shelly Collins-Fuerbringer, Youth Services Manager
- Teresa Kriese, Business Manager
- Kristin Nickel, Technology Manager
- Renee Ponzo, Reference Services Manager
- Isa Small, Programming & Communications Services Manager
- Paula Stanton, Circulation Services Manager
- Julie Woodruff, Technical Services Manager

**Friends**
- Brenda Brant, Past President
- Nancy Sowls, President
- Audrey Roecker, Vice-President
- Amanda Favret, Secretary
- Sarah Kocken, Treasurer
- John Stoneberg, At-Large Member
- Lisa Eierman, At-Large Member
- Jamie Claudio, Administrative Assistant (non-voting)
- Pamela Westby, Library Director, Ex-Officio Member (non-voting)
- Isa Small, Library Programming & Communications Services Manager (non-voting)

## OPERATING BUDGET

**Fund Balance January 1, 2018**: $1,048,397

### Receipts:
- City of Eau Claire: $3,107,100
- County of Eau Claire: 606,155
- Other Wisconsin Counties: 154,574
- Indianhead Federated Library System: 34,294
- Fines & Fees: 43,890
- Grants & Gifts: 102,326
- Miscellaneous Revenue: 17,940
- **Use of Fund Balance**: –
  - **Total Receipts**: $4,066,279

### Disbursements:
- Salaries & Benefits: $3,032,678
- Contractual Service: 454,285
- Materials & Supplies: 590,597
- Debt Service: 40,360
- Capital Expenditure: 19,391
  - **Total Disbursements**: $(4,137,312)

### BALANCE

- Transfer to Gift Reserve: 95,789
- Reserve for Transfer to Capital Projects: –
- Prepayments: 52,537
- Inventory: 3,264
- Revenue Control: 4,066,279
- Expense Control: 4,137,312
  - **Undesignated Fund Balance December 31, 2018**: $896,807
With all of the new materials and services being promoted by public libraries these days, it can sometimes feel like books are getting left behind. **That isn’t so.**

The definition of literacy may be expanding, but your library is first and foremost about reading.

In 2018, participants of all ages rocked out on reading to the theme of “Reading Rock Stars.” Special storytimes featured performances by local musicians, and the adult program held its first-ever end-of-program party.

Youth Services staff often use videos to promote special events, and they outdid themselves this time. The embarrassment-proof team created a summer reading program video which reached 9,737 people, had 6,507 views, and 171 reactions, comments, and shares on Facebook.

Books are still the most popular item at the library. In 2018, the library checked out 533,585 books. That’s almost two thirds of total circulation.
HAVING FUN!

Who doesn’t like having a good time? We think enjoyment for enjoyment’s sake is worthwhile, but it’s even better when a greater purpose is also being served. Recent studies in brain research suggest that people learn better when they’re having fun, and no one appreciates research more than a librarian.

• Monthly passive games for adults.
• Chippewa Valley Book Festival events.
• “Customer Appreciation Day.”
• Nationally-known children’s musician Jim Gill.
• “Dino Week” program series for youth.
• United Way “Read to Me” storytime with WEAU’s Monica Ott.
• Wisconsin Public Television’s “PBS Get Up and Go Day.”
• Special youth and maker activities over school breaks.
• “Dabble Day” returned with more partners, more participants, and more to learn.
• 282 Potterheads celebrated at “Hogwarts After Dark” for adults.
• International Games Week with giant games for youth and gaming sessions for grown-ups.
“Without the library I don’t think I’d be here.”
—Michael Xiong, Eau Claire City Council Member

“Thriving libraries like ours are adapting to social and technological advances. The library is more than a warehouse for books or a location for storytimes. It’s the people’s university. As the capital campaign progresses we will be able to share the story of how the public library is an inclusive entity for everyone—regardless of life circumstances—to pursue lifelong learning, and how this expansion will further benefit future generations.” —Pamela Westby, Library Director

On Wednesday, October 10 2018, Nickolas Butler read his essay “The Public Library” for the first time at the newly opened Pablo Center at the Confluence’s “Hard Times: An Artistic Exploration of Poverty in Eau Claire.” Many listeners were moved to tears, and a number of them responded instantly to Butler’s appeal to support the library with monetary donations. In the end, checks totaling $695, including Butler’s own check, were pressed upon a stunned but grateful librarian, Isa Small, who was in attendance. “The outpouring of support was amazing,” said Small. “It’s a gift to believe in the value of the work you do. It’s indescribable to hear over 300 people, people who aren’t librarians, say they believe in it, too.”

Libraries are the best of America. Do you know that in most countries around the world, libraries are rarer than rubies? There are no small-town libraries even in oldest Europe. Libraries are an American promise, and through the library door a democracy shambles in; the poorest and the richest. Everyone’s library card looks the same. No one’s voice is louder than anyone else’s. No one’s money really matters; return your books on time, keep your promises, lend, borrow, share, pay your penalties, forgive those who can’t pay—every seven cycles there shall be a jubilee, a forgiveness.
—From “The Public Library” by Nickolas Butler
1,783 kids, 525 teens, and 288 adults in summer reading

34,338 cardholders

199 Home Delivery customers served

Hotspots loaned 254 times

51,096 uses of public Internet computers

65,871 reference questions answered

856,918 items checked out

119,130 downloads of digital media

33,842 people attended programs

403,498 in-person visits
SO MUCH MORE...