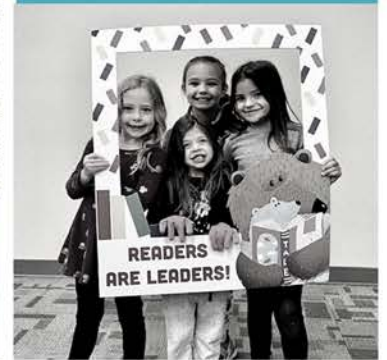


ANNUAL REPORT

Washington County Free Library
Washington County, MD

FY
20
22



ANNUAL REPORT

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A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The theme of this year's report is recovery; recovery from the impacts of COVID, but more specifically, the role the library has played in the community as we work to restore and fortify.

Staff of the Washington County Free Library worked diligently in the community to increase access to materials, information and programming. During the 2022 fiscal year, WCFL saw a 98% increase in foot traffic and a 56% increase to material circulation over 2021. While patrons are enjoying visiting physical locations to select materials, there has also been a great reception to the remote pickup lockers that are available throughout the county branches and at the North Pointe Shopping Center in Hagerstown.

The library also hosted a wide variety of programs, catered to all ages and interests. These programs highlighted important partnerships, including those with the Washington County Public Schools, Chamber of Commerce and Health Department, as well as Maryland Symphony Orchestra and Department of Natural Resources.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without a public who cares deeply for education and access to information; so I extend my deepest thanks to all who took part of making 2022 a fantastic year.

The Board of Trustees and staff of our library look forward to continuing the important work of bolstering this community, and providing resources to all in Washington County in 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny L. Bakos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jenny Bakos, Executive Director



LIBRARY USE

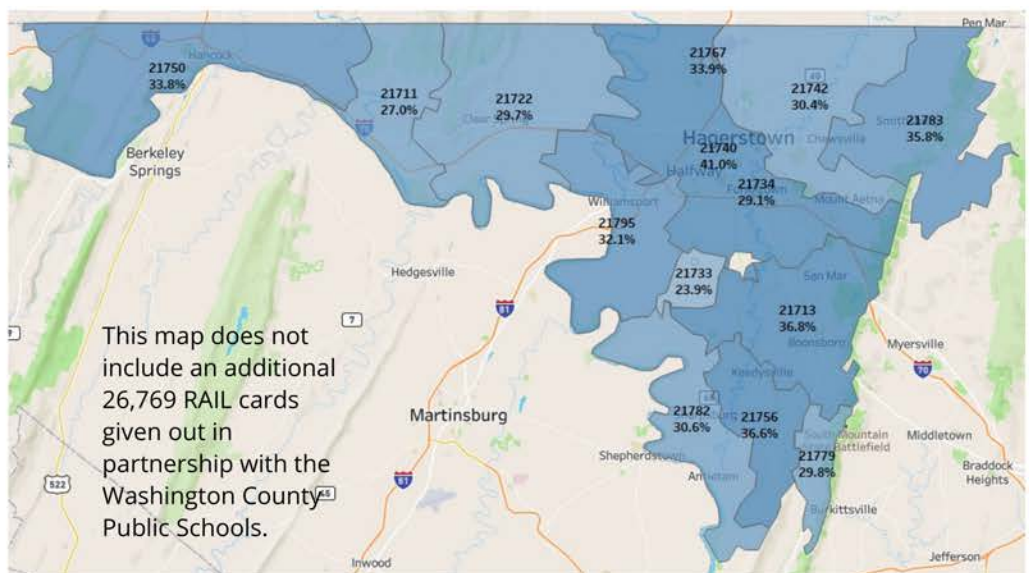
As with public libraries everywhere, Washington County Free Library is navigating the "new normal" to continue efficiently serving the community's changing needs. Residents of Washington County visited the system's **eight branches** and **one bookmobile**, and WCFL's collection of **372,265 physical materials** and quality digital library offerings means there is something for everyone to borrow.

LIBRARY VISITS



Visits increased by **98%** between FY2021 and FY2022.

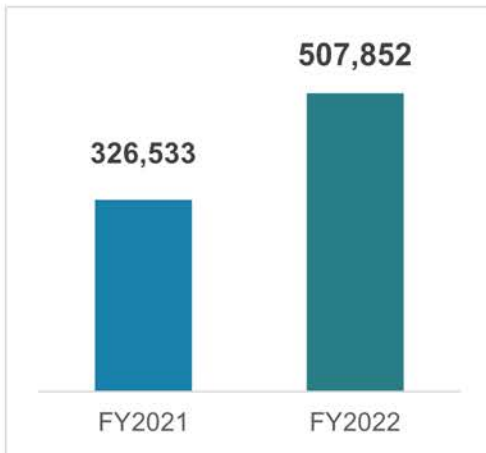
REGISTERED CARDHOLDERS BY ZIPCODE



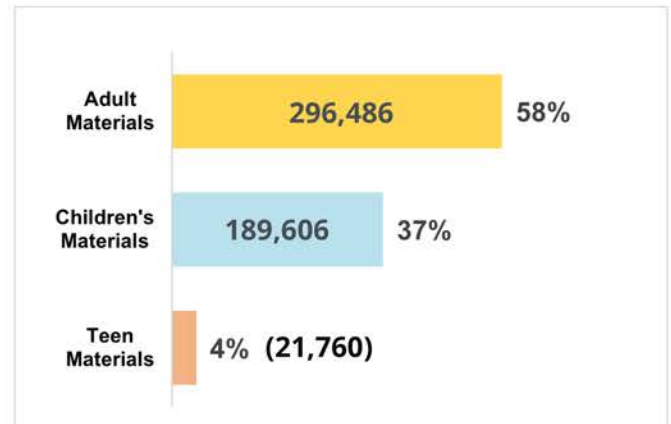
Approximately **53% of residents** were cardholders of the county's 154,937 people in FY22 with **82,541 total cardholders**.

TOTAL CIRCULATION

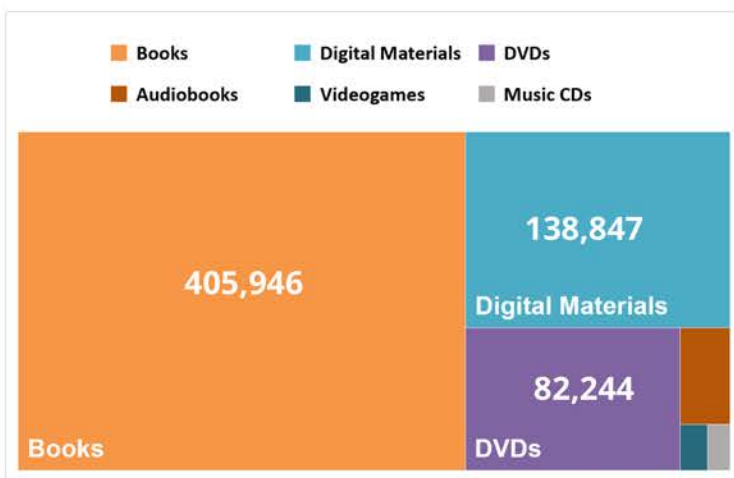
Circulation increased by **56%** between FY2021 and FY2022.



PHYSICAL MATERIALS CIRCULATED BY TYPE



CIRCULATION BY FORMAT



INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Total Materials:

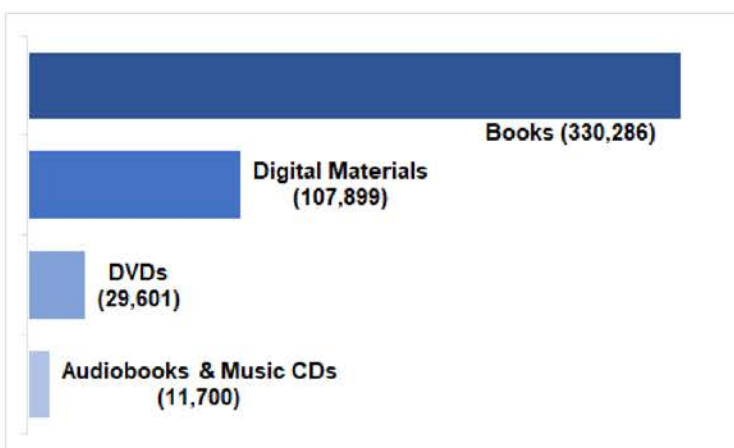
18,761

9,344 Materials Borrowed

9,417 Materials Lent

Interlibrary Loan allows Washington County community members to access materials available in libraries throughout Maryland and beyond.

LIBRARY COLLECTIONS



678 other materials are not represented in this graphic.

MEETING ROOMS & STUDY SPACES

229	Meetings Hosted
2,190	Study Rooms Booked

Meeting rooms offer space for community organizations, businesses, and more, and study spaces offer students, small business owners, and others a quiet, private space to study or meet.

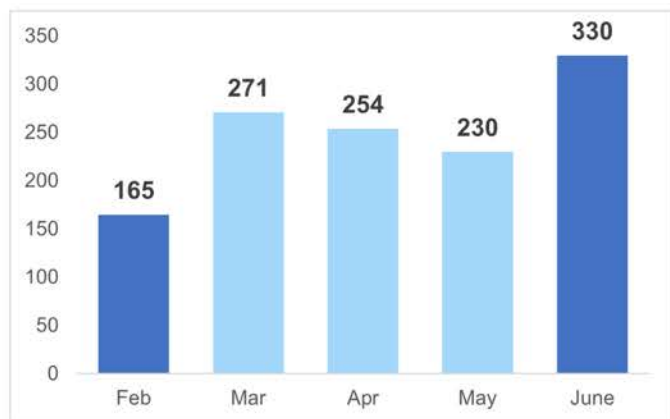


ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

Washington County Free Library is dedicated to making life-changing services and resources available to all community members.

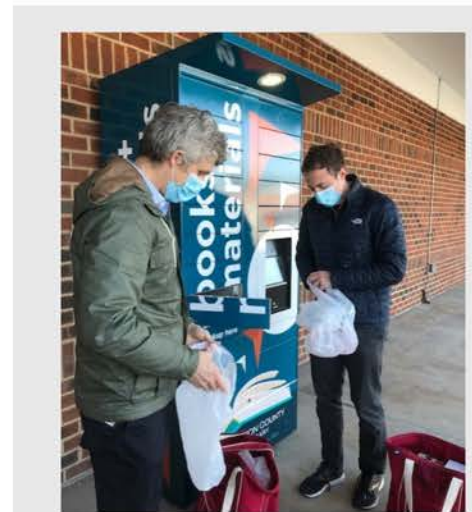
In February, WCFL **expanded service to the North End of Hagerstown with the first off-site smart locker system in the state** located at the North Pointe Shopping Center! Library holds lockers at county branches quickly became a popular way to pick up items after hours.

NORTH POINTE LOCKER USE OVER TIME



Books made up 87% of the materials checked out through the North Pointe Lockers.

There was a 64% increase in use of the North Pointe Lockers from February to March, and a 100% increase in use from February to June. We expect that growth to continue.



Library Stories

One patron said that the library is better than Amazon with this addition as they can get free books and DVDs conveniently. They quipped, "the library is amazin', not Amazon."

Access to Internet Connectivity

According to the 2020 Census, approximately 18% of households in Washington County do not have a home internet connection. WCFL branches have **104 public computers**, in addition to printers, scanners, and more to help lessen the digital divide in Washington County.

13,876	Wi-Fi Sessions
38,986	Computer Sessions
37,862	Computer + Wi-Fi Hours

Community members visited WCFL's **71 premium digital services** for accurate, trusted database results a total of **120,775 times**.

Access to Information

Library staff work hard to meet a wide range of information needs for all community members quickly, efficiently, and compassionately. This year, staff answered **61,188 questions**. That's 177 questions per day!

Library Stories

The Williamsport Memorial Library saw a steady uptick in computer use in fall and winter months, especially among older patrons. Many of these seniors have reported that they need an email address in order to access benefits or even to pay their rent.

The Williamsport Library staff helped these seniors learn how to click a computer mouse, create accounts, and log in to access the community services they need.

Library Stories

At the beginning of August, Clear Spring library staff met an out-of-town patron experiencing homelessness. Staff helped her find local resources that could provide food and shelter for her and her two dogs. She called the next day to thank us— she received the help she needed.



PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES

The Washington County Free Library offers programming for all ages groups. In fiscal year 2022, WCFL continued to offer virtual programs and take-and-make craft kits. Washington County community members and staff alike were excited by the return to in-person programming!

**33,310 PEOPLE ATTENDED
1,838 PROGRAMS**

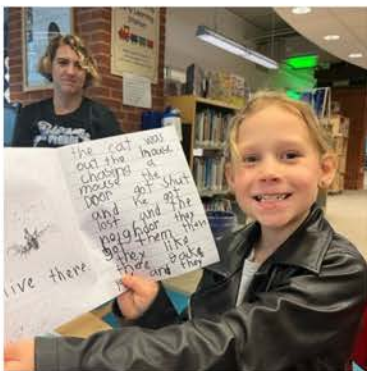
**18 ATTENDEES PER
PROGRAM ON AVERAGE**



22,322 CHILDREN (67%)

2,095 TEENS (6%)

8,893 ADULTS (27%)



WCFL has focused resources to help foster caregiver engagement and support childcare providers in early childhood learning.

Storytimes with crafts, songs, and activities offer children and caregivers opportunities to engage with one another, learn, and grow. Children and young adults explored their interest in literature with book clubs and writing contents, as well as STEM with experiments and building challenges.

Book giveaways, author visits, creative maker experiences, and more offer students of all ages opportunities to learn and grow. Library staff are available to offer homework help and research assistance to K-12 students and beyond.

As the school library for the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, the Fletcher Branch Library Young Adult Department staff continued to support students with information literacy instruction and research assistance.



Library Stories

At the Smithsburg Branch Library, Infant Time resumed in December. According to Branch Manager Tammy Gantz, “these were all babies born during the pandemic and you can see them soaking everything in –the music, books, rhymes, and the other babies. It was an amazing event to witness.”



WCFL Program Highlights

Big Red Box

The Big Red Box program resumed as of January 2022. Each month, Bookmobile staff distribute Big Red Boxes full of themed books, manipulatives, and activities to daycare centers and Head Starts throughout the county. Childcare providers love WCFL staff storytime visits.

Summer Reading Club

Summer Reading Club helps prevent "summer slide" for students with a balance of self-paced reading goals and fun programs. WCFL's "Oceans of Possibilities" 2022 program had our highest percentage rate of finishers ever at 67%!

Kids explored "Oceans of Possibilities" all summer long with a beautiful saltwater tank filled with aquatic creatures at the Smithsburg Branch Library.

Career Curious

A new program series, Career Curious, invited local panelists to share their experiences in the arts and as women in industry with teens and emerging adults considering their future paths.

WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES

Life skills workshops, financial and digital literacy classes, one-on-one job search support, and community partnerships help WCFL provide ample opportunities for job seekers, entrepreneurs, and business owners to learn and connect.



Library Stories

A patron came in to the library to learn how to use a computer. She did not know how to type, save a document, or format a basic letter. The Williamsport team helped her throughout the week as she prepared and submitted a job application. The patron returned several days after submitting the application just to let the library know that she did indeed get the job.

To foster an interconnected community, the library incorporates multicultural and diverse thinking into our programming, reaches out to historically underserved communities, and collaborates with other organizations to strengthen bonds.





WCFL Program Highlights

Employment Fair

WCFL partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to host an Employment Fair with local employers. 55 job seekers were able to speak with potential businesses looking to hire. This event was held in conjunction with a Covid-19 vaccine clinic.

Washington County Free Library strives to anticipate and be responsive to community aspirations and needs, both current and future.

One need that library staff met this year was programming for Washington County residents ages 18-25. These emerging adults expressed a need for a space to build community and seek guidance as they navigate adulthood. Staff created an Emerging Adults collection and programming to meet these needs. WCFL staff are now sharing their work with other libraries in the state interested in creating Emerging Adults collections and programs.

Black History Month

A display for Black History Month showcasing depictions of Black people in art and advertisements of the past opened dialogues for families to talk about about history, race, and our community.

McCauley Lectures

The longstanding McCauley Historical Lecture series continued to highlight the work of local historians, archivists, and authors. Dr. Emilie Amt, a featured lecturer, published a book called *Black Antietam: African Americans and the Civil War in Sharpsburg*. The last line of her acknowledgments says, "I owe an enormous debt to librarians and archivists who delivered materials in difficult conditions.... above all, Elizabeth Howe at the Western Maryland Room."

Winter Spice Club

Community members planted a tree with an arborist, explored uses of different spices with the Winter Spice Club, and learned about edible plants while enjoying flower cookies and other treats at the Sharpsburg Branch Library!

Library Stories



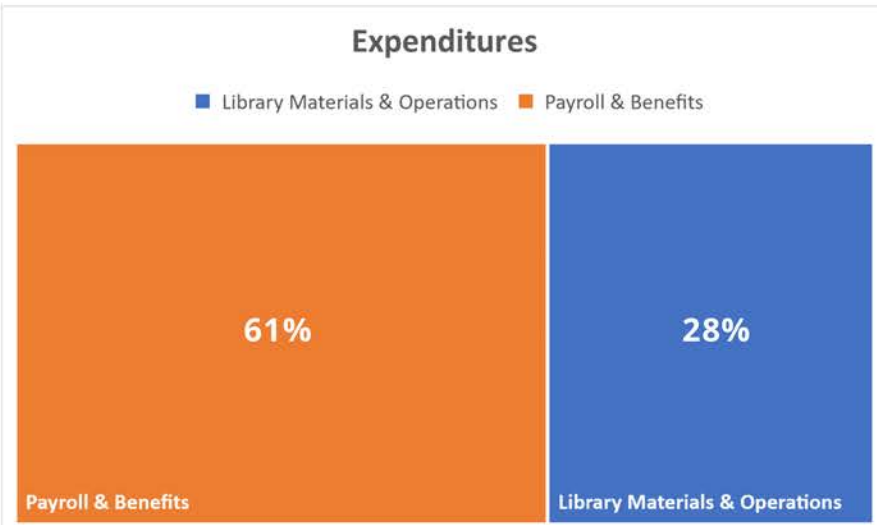
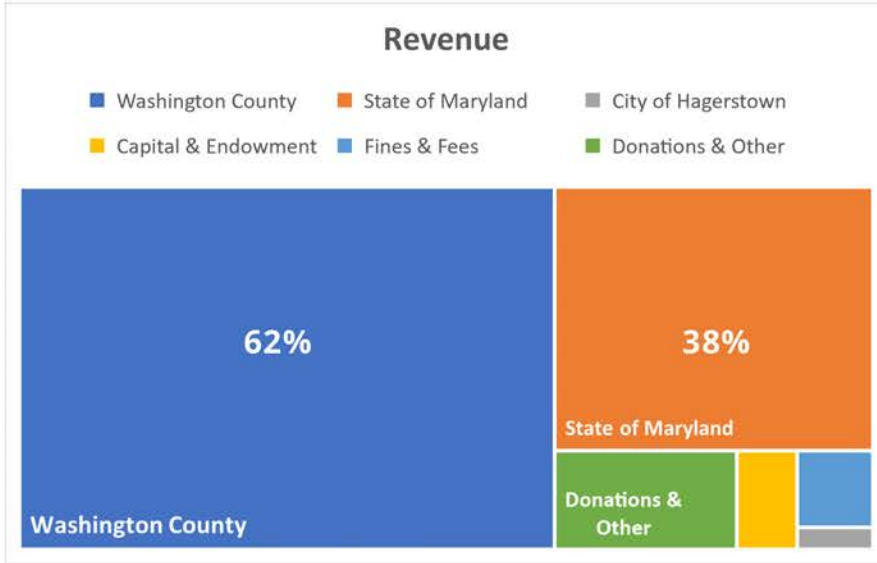
A resident at Creekside Assisted Living @ Robinwood called to ask if we could bring the bookmobile regularly and the bookmobile crew were happy to oblige. Mr. Ben is 102 years old. He uses a wheelchair, but since the bookmobile has a wheelchair lift, he can come aboard to select a few books and movies.

He likes to have the movies shown in their community room. At first, he requested westerns but a lot of the other residents were falling asleep. In his words, "some of these people need to liven up!" Staff recommended he show musicals and that seemed to do the trick!



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total Budget: \$5,309,324.00



The staff listed here work hard every day to provide free materials, programs, and other services to the Washington County community across eight branches and a bookmobile.

Staff Breakdown by Position FY22

WCFL Personnel (Total FTE): 72

16 Professional Librarians

These positions require a **Master's Degree** from an American Library Association accredited college or university and a **Professional Librarian Certificate** from the State of Maryland, along with the completion of continuing education credits on an annual basis.

3 Professional Support Staff

These positions require either a **Bachelor's Degree or a Master's Degree** in a specialized field relating to either Information Technology or Finance.

12 FT | 13 PT Library Associates

These positions require a **Bachelor's Degree** and the completion of a **LATI** (Library Associates Training Institute) certification, along with the completion of continuing education credits on an annual basis.

18 FT | 28 PT Library Assistants

1 FT | 3 PT

Security Officers

2 FT Maintenance Workers

2 PT Custodians

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Investing in the well-being of your community pays dividends. When you invest in your public library system, those dollars are put toward educational infrastructure, economic development, cultivating connections, and beyond.

The personal stories shared by Washington County residents who use the library, the quantitative data gathered throughout FY22, and the below Estimated Value of Library Services chart offer a snapshot of Washington County Free Library's impact.

Estimated Value of Library Services

Quantity	Service	Retail Value*	Value
18,761	Research Materials via ILL	\$25.00	\$469,025.00
405,946	Books and Print Materials Borrowed	\$22.00	\$8,930,812.00
101,381	DVDs and Other Media Borrowed	\$18.00	\$1,824,858.00
138,847	eBook & Audiobooks Downloaded	\$27.00	\$3,748,869.00
61,188	One-on-One Research and Tech Assistance	\$20.00	\$1,223,760.00
24,417	Children and Teens Programs Attendees	\$16.00	\$390,672.00
8,893	Adult Programs Attendees	\$18.00	\$160,074.00
120,775	Premium Digital Resource Searches	\$15.00	\$1,811,625.00
37,862	Computer and Wi-Fi Hours	\$13.00	\$492,206.00
2,190	Study Room Use	\$50.00	\$109,500.00
229	Community Meeting Room Use	\$250.00	\$57,250.00
Total:			\$19,218,651.00

*Retail Value based on estimates.

For every \$1 Washington County spent on library services, the community received approximately \$5.70 worth in services.

PARTNERSHIPS

Washington County Free Library is generously supported by elected officials at the city, county, and state levels.

Notable partnerships this year include:

- WCFL distributed over 3,000 Covid-19 at-home test kits and over 5,000 KN-95 masks provided by the Washington County Health Department to county residents.
- WCFL and Washington County Public Schools updated the CLASS partnership to ensure students have access to library resources they need for success. 26,498 WCPS students have RAIL (Raising Access to Improve Literacy) library accounts they can use to check out materials or use library computers.
- Meritus Health, Kiwanis of Hagerstown, and the City of Hagerstown Parks & Recreation Department supported efforts to create a permanent StoryWalk in City Park.
- Throughout 2022, WCFL collaborated with Discovery Station to distribute 1,000 kits with STEAM and financial literacy activities to preschool aged children. WCFL also partnered with Discovery Station and the Washington County Arts Council to make Art Kits for families to check out and get creative together.
- Through the Department of Natural Resources, fishing poles are now available for checkout at the Boonsboro Free Library.
- Authentic Community Theatre presented original performances based on Summer Reading Club themes to accompany WCFL's puppet show presentations throughout the county.
- The Boonsboro Free Library and Sharpsburg Branch Library partnered with their towns to offer outdoor movie nights during the summer months.
- The Fletcher Branch Library Children's Department presented virtual musical storytimes in partnership with musicians from the Maryland Symphony Orchestra.



The library wishes to thank Washington County, the City of Hagerstown, and the many community organizations that provide support for our classes, workshops, special programs, and activities throughout the year.

- Apples for Children
- Authentic Community Theatre
- Baltimore Orioles
- Barbara Ingram School for the Arts
- Bester Community of Hope
- Boys & Girls Club of Washington County
- Chick-Fil-A
- CISCO
- Citizens for Maryland Libraries
- City of Hagerstown
- The Collegium
- Community Action Council
- Community Foundation of Washington County
- Dairy Queen
- Denny's
- Discovery Station
- First United Bank and Trust
- Food Lion
- Frederick Keys
- Fresh Academicz
- Friends of the Library
- Google
- Hadley Farms Bakery
- Hagerstown Community College
- Head Start of Washington County
- Herald-Mail Media
- Horizon Goodwill
- Hospice of Washington County
- Hope Through Birth
- Hub@Hagerstown
- Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Judy Center of Washington County
- Kiwanis of Hagerstown
- Krispy Kreme
- Labor of Love
- Law Enforcement/Mental Health Task Force
- Live 96.7
- Martin's Foods
- Maryland Coalition of Families
- Maryland 529
- Maryland Humanities Council
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Division of Library Development and Services
- Maryland Science Center
- Maryland State Department of Education
- Maryland State Library Resource Center
- The Maryland Theatre
- Meritus Health
- Meritus Medical Center
- Middletown Valley Bank
- Misty Meadows Farm Creamery
- Neighborhoods First
- The Nora Roberts Family Foundation
- OnTrack Washington County, Inc.
- Potomac Case Management
- Potomac Valley Audubon Society
- Sharpsburg Historical Society
- Sheetz, Inc.
- Sheehy Hagerstown
- Sila Bartel
- Star Theatre
- SueChefs.org
- Town of Boonsboro
- Town of Clear Spring
- Town of Hancock
- Town of Keedysville
- Town of Sharpsburg
- Town of Smithsburg
- Town of Williamsport
- Tri-State Astronomers
- United Way of Washington County
- University System of Maryland at Hagerstown
- U.S. National Park Service
- Visit Hagerstown - Washington County CVB
- Volvo Group Trucks
- Waffle House
- WashCOLIT
- Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- Washington County Commission on Aging, Inc.
- Washington County Historical Society
- Washington County Homeless Coalition
- Washington County Master Gardeners
- Washington County Museum of Fine Arts
- Washington County Public Schools
- Washington County Reads
- WDVM
- Western Maryland Consortium
- Western Maryland Regional Library
- William Brish Planetarium
- Weis Markets
- WJEJ 1240 AM



WASHINGTON COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Where People & Possibilities Meet



Boonsboro



Clear Spring



Hancock



Keedysville



Hagerstown



Sharpsburg



Smithsburg



Bookmobile



Williamsport

How can I support my library?

Join the Friends of the Library!

Join a group of library lovers who fundraise, advocate, and volunteer their time to support free library programs! Membership is just \$5 a year.

Speak Up!

Advocate for your library locally, at the state level, and at the federal level. Let your elected officials know why public libraries matter to you.

Donate!

Financially support your library to help further our mission, purchase materials, offer free educational and cultural programming, and more.