

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

120TH EDITION

Welcoming Online
Events Beautiful Buildings
Resources Selection
History Helpful
Books
Knowledgeable
Programming



St. Joseph Public Library
Part of *Your* Story

SJPL.LIB.MO.US

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Mission

The St. Joseph Public Library provides our community physical and virtual gathering spaces to access information, education, and recreation.

Vision

The St. Joseph Public Library offers our community a window to the past and a gateway to the future.

Values

The St. Joseph Public Library values:

ACCOUNTABILITY We are dedicated to delivering on our commitments and the sound stewardship of our taxpayer dollars.

EXCELLENCE We are courteous professionals who strive to create extraordinary experiences for our community.

EQUALITY We are free and open to all people and ideas. We treat everyone with respect and compassion.

INNOVATION We are always learning. We continually explore new ways of doing things better and doing better things.

PASSION We love the library, we love St. Joseph, and we love what we do.

TEAMWORK We build connections and celebrate the diversity of our experiences.

*The front page graphic and quotes in the report were pulled from survey responses.



It's never too early to open a book. Storytime at the Downtown Library.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kyla Ward – President
Bobbie Cronk – Treasurer
Joshua Bachman
David Jordan
LaTonya Williams

Rosetta Ballew-Jennings – Vice President
Harriet Gordon – Secretary
Heidi DeSchepper
Jonht Slayden

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Mary Beth Revels – Director
Jenny Ellis – Branch Manager, Carnegie Library
Jen Wildhagen – Branch Manager, Downtown Library
Crystal Stuck – Branch Manager, East Hills Library
Karen Schultz – Branch Manager, Washington Park Library
Lisa Ransom – Manager, Children’s Services, Downtown Library
Misty Snider – Manager, Children’s Services, East Hills Library
Jessica Poet – Manager, Outreach and Marketing Services
Sharon Canter – Manager, Reference Services
Sarah Gockley – Manager, Technical Services Department



Lisa Ransom, Misty Snider, Jessica Poet, and Erika Martinez Trejo at a St. Joseph School District Family Literacy Event.



Author Erin Stewart, signing books at Central High School. Her visit was a collaboration between SJPL, The Story Collective, and St. Joseph School District.

FRIENDS OF THE ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Felicia Hawkins – President
Barb Yarbrough – Secretary
Cathy Green
Valerie Martinez
Kenetha Weidmaier

Annie Updegraff – Vice President
Matthew White – Treasurer
Lisa Logan
Pat Sander

The Friends of the St. Joseph Public Library is a 501(c)(3) organization and had 129 paid members during the fiscal year. The Friends support SJPL and the community in multiple ways. They provide funding for the Summer Reading Program. They funded four students working toward their diplomas through the Gale Excel Adult High School program. The Friends sponsor the weekly Friends Front Row Tuesday Night Film Series hosted by Bob Shultz. They are also an annual supporter of the Allied Arts Sculpture Walk.

The Friends raise money through memberships, sales of book bags, and by hosting book sales. In addition to traditional book sales, they sponsored a Boozy Book Fair held at The Den. The event was organized by SJPL staff member Jessica Poet and was reminiscent of a school book fair, but for adults.

Staff members Jessica Poet, Olivia Wildhagen-Piercy, Katie Green, and Mary Beth Revels all assist with the day-to-day activities of the Friends.

Pictured are shoppers at the Boozy Book Fair and Jessica Poet, with Washington Park book bags at the Jewels of St. Joseph Tour.



ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

LeeAnn Leonard – President
Drew Brown – Secretary
Susan Campbell
Whitney Lanning
Bobbie Cronk

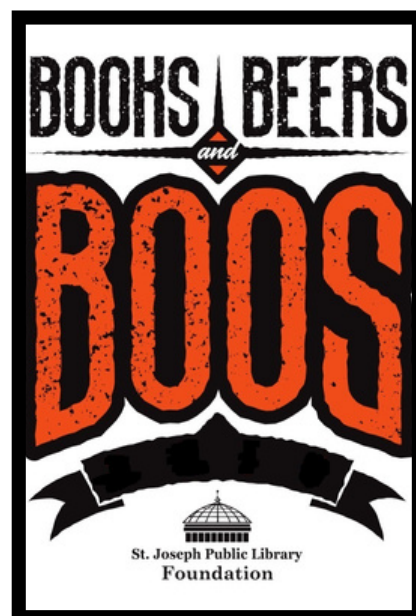
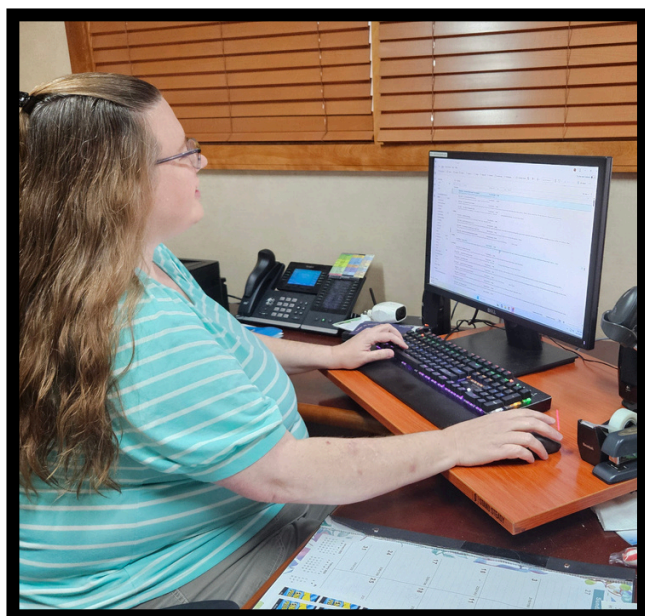
Alison Schieber – Vice President
Bill McMurray – Treasurer
Brian Kirk
Nancy Nash
Kyla Ward

The St. Joseph Public Library Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that promotes private donations to help ensure SJPL's future. The SJPL Foundation typically supports the library by funding one-time special requests. During the fiscal year, the Foundation provided funding to replace sixteen staff computers that were several years old.

The Foundation raises money through an annual fundraising drive, the sale of holiday cards designed by staff member Jessica Poet, and the Books, Beers and Boos fundraiser.

Books, Beers & Boos was held at River Bluff Brewing. Local author, Lory Lacy, spoke about her recently published book "The Victorian: The Past Lives of Jack the Ripper" and had copies of her book for sale. Commemorative beer glasses and a free beer, provided by River Bluff Brewing were all part of the \$25 ticket.

Pictured: Crystal Stuck, using her office computer that was purchased with funding provided by the SJPL Foundation.



FINANCES

Income

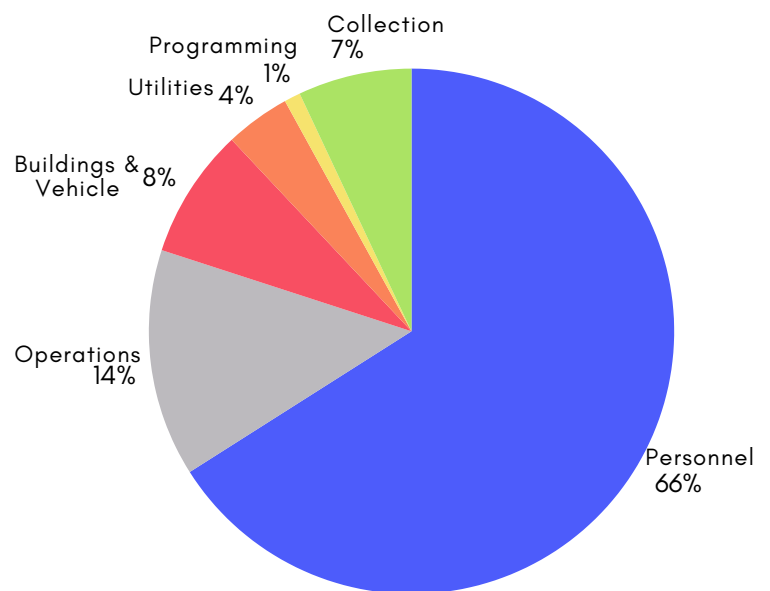
Local Tax Income	\$ 3,799,835
State Aid	\$ 43,608
Grants	\$ 16,235
Athletes & Entertainers Funds	\$ 47,763
Interest	\$ 49,758
Donations	\$ 19,137
CVB Rent	\$ 4,861
Other	\$ 22,559

Total Income \$ 4,003,756

Expenses

Personnel	\$2,562,537
Collection	\$ 255,539
Programming	\$ 39,958
Buildings & Vehicle	\$ 303,249
Utilities	\$ 146,833
Operations	\$ 560,839

Total Expenses \$ 3,868,955



Grants

Summer Reading: The Missouri State Library awarded a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant supplied by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The grant supported the Color Our World 2025 Summer Reading Program by underwriting some costs for prizes.

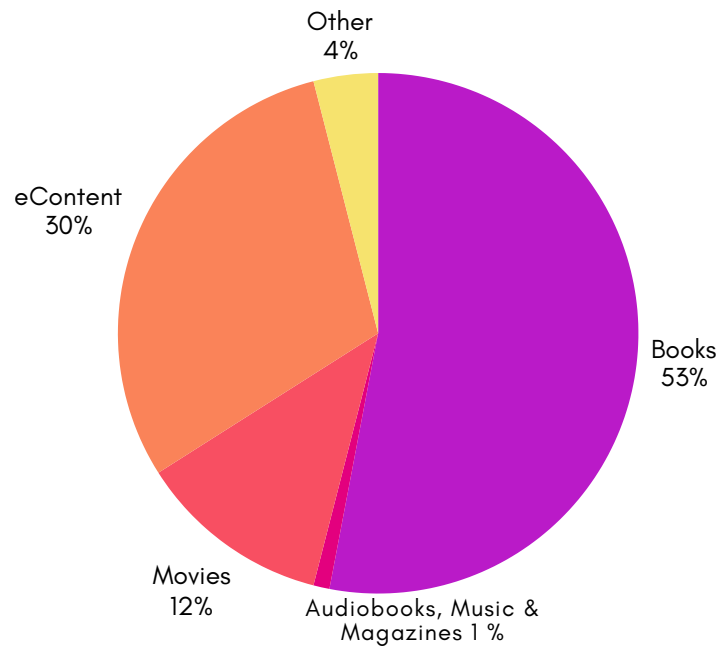
Creative Aging Lifetime Arts is an initiative of the Califa Group, Wyoming State Library, Missouri State Library, and Lifetime Arts. It was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant. SJPL contracted with local professional artist Annie Corrington to lead several series of art classes targeted to adults 55 and older.

American Heart Association approved a grant to address food insecurity. SJPL offered several cooking programs throughout the year focused on healthy and affordable food.

Mosaic Life Care Foundation Natalia Larkin received a Jump Starter Grant to purchase popular children and teen books in languages other than English for the East Hills Library.

STATISTICS

Checkouts	Total	Adult	Teen	Children
Books	118,712	71,442	3,380	43,890
Audiobooks	2,456	1,889	6	561
Movies	26,731	22,603	42	4,086
eContent	66,450	57,382	3,233	5,835
Magazines	415	415	N/A	N/A
Music	935	929	1	5
Other (Hotspots, Kits, Fishing Poles, Seed Packets)	9,887	9,715	N/A	172
Total Checkouts	225,586	164,375	6,662	54,549



Programs	Programs Offered	Attendance
Preschool	233	5,516
Kids	228	7,682
Teens	67	1,020
Adults	339	5,017
Total	867	19,235

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

SJPL provides educational, fun, and engaging programs for all ages.

"The library has fun things to do. There are all kinds of different types of programs to attend in addition to the great books I get to check out."



DIRECTOR'S REPORT



The St. Joseph Public Library has existed since 1890 when citizens overwhelmingly voted “yes” to create it.

Since 2004, SJPL has operated four library branches, with three of those buildings opening in the early 1900s.

I’m proud that SJPL has been a part of St. Joseph for so long and has played a part in so many lives.

A library is about books and information, but most importantly, we are about people. The people who visit us and the people who work here all make SJPL the library it is.

SJPL has dedicated staff at our four locations who provide programs that are fun, engaging, and educational. Elizabeth Murray, pictured top left with a Dinosaur at the TEA-Rex Party for children, is the Programming Librarian at the East Hills Library. The TEA-Rex party was a hit, by the way! Staff member Grace Stevens donned a dinosaur costume and made the program possible.



SJPL is also blessed to have staff like Evelyn Holtzclaw, pictured on the left. Evelyn received the 2024 Youth Alliance Superstars for Kids Adult Ally Award and is pictured with her nominator, Emily Lindsay. Evelyn is a Senior Library Assistant at the Downtown Library and is in charge of the teen collection and programs.

That’s two quick stories about two of our 52 staff members. You’ll find dedicated and amazing staff at all of our libraries. I invite you to visit our libraries and meet our fantastic staff.

Mary Beth Revels

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

SJPL updated our logo this year. The Board of Trustees more than approved the logo, Board members were part of the design team, along with staff members. The committee was led by Kyla Ward, who was the chief designer. The new logo is colorful and symbolizes all four library locations, with each branch represented by a different colored page in a book.

The Reference Department, housed in the Downtown Library, continues to be one of the best resources for local history information in St. Joseph. Our Reference Librarians are hard at work creating an Archives Collection space that houses the SJPL local history collection. The Archives space will be completed in the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

SJPL offers a wide selection of online resources at <https://sjpl.lib.mo.us/databases> and over the last year there were 27,380 searches completed. We offer legal forms, stock analysis, job search and resume help, homework help, veteran assistance, information on health, genealogy, car repair, phone numbers, travel information, and much more.

The Gale Excel Adult High School program allows us to help adults complete their high school education online. So far, ten adults have completed the program that offers an accredited high school diploma.

We are appreciative of the volunteers who give of their time to help the library in various ways. During the year, 69 people volunteered for 147 hours at the library.

Library staff participated in community programs and events throughout the year including: United Way Reading Adventures, St. Joe Pride Festival, Juneteenth, MWSU Community Resource Fair, Tiny Tot Town, Children's Fair, Trunk or Treats, Latinos Connect events, Family Literacy Nights, and St. Joe Seed Swap.

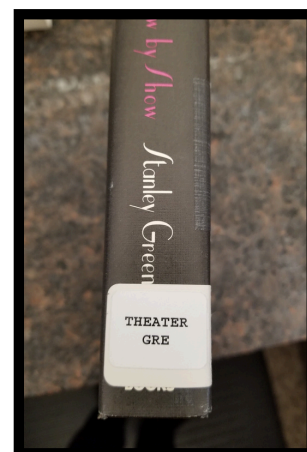
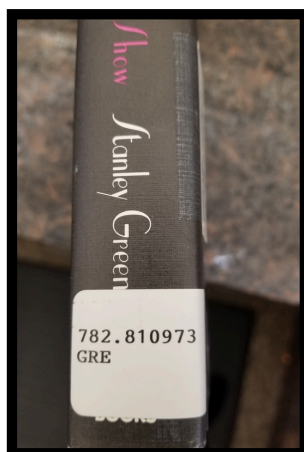


The Seed Library continues to be popular. Over 9,000 herb, vegetable and flower seed packets were distributed to happy gardeners this year.

"The library has a great selection, the employees are very helpful and friendly and I appreciate the additional resources available through Missouri Evergreen."

COLLECTIONS

The Downtown Library began a "genrefication" project. Staff is transitioning the non-fiction collection from being categorized by the Dewey Decimal System to arranging the books by topic. The goal is to put books with the same theme and topic in the same shelving area to make browsing the collection easier.



BUILDINGS

Jenny Ellis became Manager of the Carnegie Library in April 2024 and had a goal of returning the circulation desk to its original location in the middle of the main floor. By December, the desk was moved, refurbished, and expanded.

The Downtown Library switched ownership in August 2024. Northwest Health Services was looking for a new location for the Downtown Health Clinic and SJPL was looking for an organization to share the building. SJPL owned the building for two years, and is happy to be a tenant again. The building has housed the Downtown Library since 1902, and that will continue long into the future.

Crystal Stuck became Manager of the East Hills Library in August 2024. She organized staff groups to take care of several areas of the library: Library Aesthetics, Circulation Desk Reorganization, Lobby Reorganization, Staff Area Reorganization, and Breakroom Remodel. All of the project groups completed their tasks within a few months.

The Washington Park Library was a featured location in *Jewels of St. Joseph: A Showcase of Architectural Gems* Tour on September 15, 2024. Library staff prepared for the event by writing scripts for docents, acting as docents, sprucing up the library, preparing displays, and hanging historic photos. Over 400 people visited the library and park as part of the tour.

"From the moment I walked in, I felt welcomed. I so appreciate the aesthetic of the library."

"I love this library and its staff, always welcoming, friendly, and helpful."

LIBRARY STAFF

Staff Development Day was held at the East Hills Library with 45 staff members attending. Presentations were Courageous Conversations led by Julie Noel, Databases & eMedia presented by Jenna Sanders, Programs: Planning & Promotion presented by Misty Snider and Crystal Stuck, Readers' Advisory 101: Practice Makes Comfortable led by Jenny Ellis and Lotería hosted by Erika Martinez Trejo and Jen Wildhagen.

A new committee was organized by Evelyn Holtzclaw. F.A.M.E (Fun, Acknowledgement, and Morale for Employees.) Representatives from every branch volunteered to serve on the committee. During their first year, they set up snack vending stations in employee areas and organized a staff family picnic.

Library staff attended in-person and virtual training through many organizations including Grand River Library Conference, InfoSec Training Institute, Homeless Institute, United Way Leadership St. Joseph, Mid-America Library Alliance, Missouri Evergreen Consortium, Missouri State Library, Missouri Library Association, Niche Academy, Public Library Association, American Red Cross, and Library Journal.

Staff also attended the following conferences: Bouchercon, a mystery/thriller genre conference, Missouri Preservation Conference, Missouri Library Association Conference, Missouri School Library Association Conference, and Missouri Evergreen Conference.

As of June 30, 2025, SJPL had 52 regular employees, 33 were full-time and 19 were part-time. SJPL also has one substitute employee who fills in when needed.



Staff's admiration of the Frog & Toad books led to a Frog and Toad kind of day at the East Hills Library.