

# 10<sup>th</sup> 2010-2020 ANNIVERSARY

## 2020 Annual Report



Inspiring Imagination | Igniting Interests | Enabling Learning



# An Unprecedented Year

# 2020 COVID-19 Timeline

## March 17

The Library closed its doors in reaction to the pandemic. Library staff stayed busy working remotely - answering the telephone, helping patrons, and registering new Library card users to access eBooks from home. The external book return was closed, and due dates for all checked-out materials were extended.

Library staff completed valuable on-line training on a variety of Library resources.

## April 21

Some staff were furloughed to conserve resources. Others continued to work remotely answering the phones and assisting patrons.

The Library website team focused on developing a new website.

## April 28

The external book return was reopened. Items were held in quarantine for seven days before being returned to the shelves.

Virtual programming was introduced on Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube.

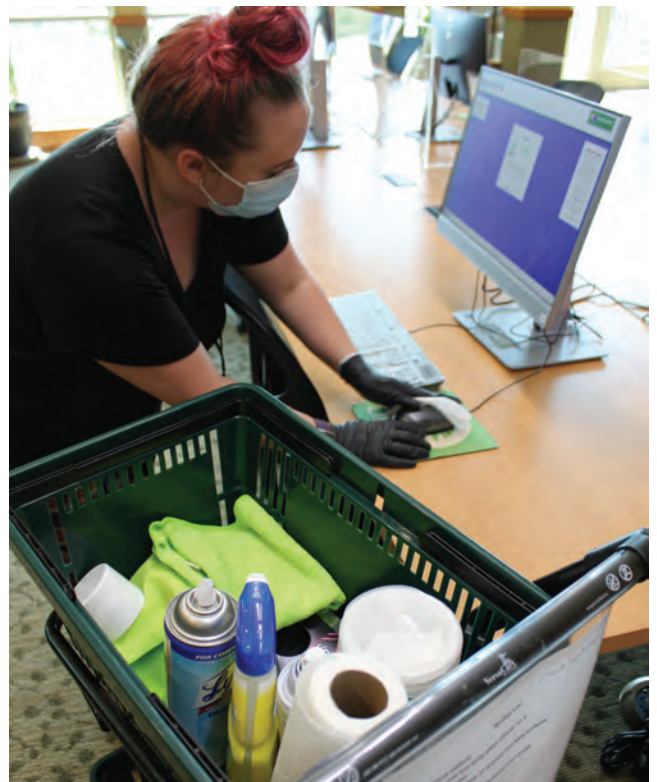
## May 18

Hold pick-up service resumed in the Library foyer, but the rest of the Library remained closed to the public.

## June 22

The Library reopened its doors to the public with limited hours. Plexi-glass was installed around the information desk and at workstations to protect patrons and staff. Sanitizing procedures were established for the building. Occupancy, facemask, and social distancing protocols were followed.

Operations were maintained at established levels throughout the remainder of the year, as COVID cases increased.



# 10<sup>th</sup> 2010-2020 ANNIVERSARY



# A Milestone Celebration

The Baxter County Library celebrated its 10th Anniversary in the Donald W. Reynolds Library building on October 10, 2020 with a COVID-safe outdoor celebration, where Library fans could pick up a cup of hot cider, a cinnamon donut, and complimentary hand sanitizer in commemoration of the historic day. Limited edition commemorative Library cards were issued, and a display in the Library foyer featured Library memorabilia.

## Locations through the years

Long before the Library as we know it today broke ground, the Baxter County Library had occupied a variety of locations. The Library was first opened in the 1930s in the basement of the Mountain Home courthouse on the square by the 20th Century Women's Club. It was a very small space run exclusively by volunteers and in the 1940s, was managed by the Business and Professional Women's Club. In the 1950s, the Library was relocated above the fire station at the north end of Baker Street, and in 1956 officially became the Baxter County Library with the establishment of a 1 mil county property tax.

In 1964, the Library moved to a brand new building on Seventh Street. The original, 3,200 square-foot building, located near the Mountain Home Square went through multiple expansions through the years, but ultimately the Library outgrew the space. In 2008, after years of hard work and perseverance, the Library Foundation was awarded a \$9.8 million grant by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation to build, equip, and furnish the 35,500 square-foot building we know and enjoy today. The Donald W. Reynolds Library serving Baxter County was dedicated on October 9, 2010.



1950s: Above fire station on Baker Street



1964-2010: 7th Street



2010-Present: 300 Library Hill



# The Virtual Experience

Adapting the Library experience for COVID-19



## A shift to virtual programming for all ages

Right after the Library closed in March due to COVID, weekly Storytimes were introduced on Facebook. By summer, many other programs had followed with virtual versions, including two weekly Yoga classes, crafting classes, and book clubs.

### Crafting Classes

Makerspace 300 and Children's DIY classes shifted to Zoom. Patrons could register with their Library card to reserve a pre-assembled kit filled with materials to use during Zoom classes.

### Summer Reading 2020

The "Imagine Your Story" Summer Reading Challenge shifted to online tracking with the READsquared app, all thanks to a grant from the Arkansas State Library. Storytimes and events paired with the program were hosted virtually on Facebook or Zoom.

### Genealogy Classes

Zoom genealogy classes were a huge success this year. Patrons learned how to use online resources such as Ancestry.com, Fold3, and Find A Grave to discover their family history.

### Read | Write | Ignite Series

With the sponsorship of the Friends of the Library, the annual Literary Series known as Read | Write | Ignite went virtual. Workshops and live interviews with authors Stephanie Storey and EllynAnne Geisel helped connect readers and aspiring local authors to professionals in the craft.

### Book Clubs

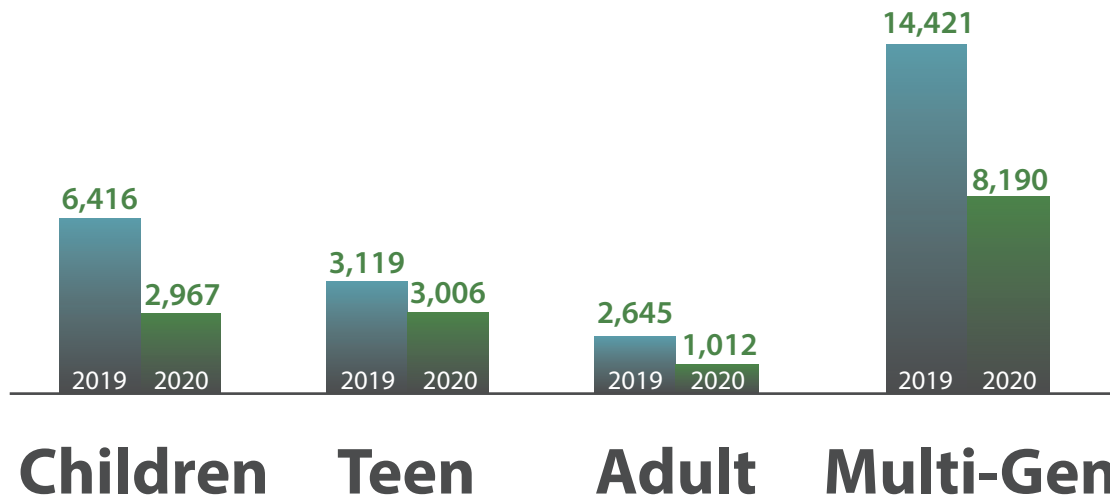
Every month book clubs offered time for togetherness and conversation. Both All Booked and Issues & Viewpoints book clubs met virtually to discuss the latest read.

# 2020 Fast Facts



**↑ 20%**  
**Followers Gained**  
**(2,960 → 3,576)**  
Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter

## Program Attendance



**137,722** items circulated in 2020.

Down **49%** compared to **274,427** in 2019.





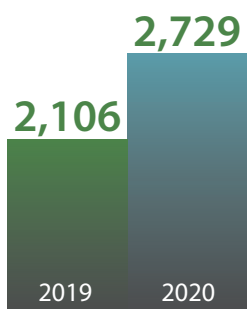
Library visits, total items circulated, and program attendance were all down, due to COVID-19, while other numbers such as eBook checkouts and Facebook as well as other social media followers increased significantly.

**eBook Check-Outs**  
**56,165 eBOOKS**  
**↑13%**



**657**  
**New Cards**  
**Issued**

### Holds Pick-Up Service



**↑29%**  
**May - June**  
**2019 & 2020**

Patrons were able to put items on hold and pick them up in the foyer while the Library was closed.

### Volunteer Hours



**↓64%**

**(13,313 → 4,776)**

Many volunteers were staying safe at home.

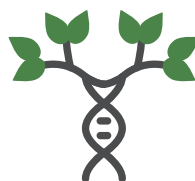
### Virtual Make It! Classes



**18 Attendees**  
**On Average**

Going virtual made it possible to increase class size limits previously set at 12.

### Ancestry.com at Home



**↑113%**  
**USAGE**

Due to COVID-19, Ancestry.com opened up access to their databases from home instead of in-Library use only.

**75,562** visits to the Library in **2020**.  
Down **57%** compared to **178,601** in **2019**.

# Expanding Our Reach

Sharing resources through outreach and technology



**F**unded by NASA and the Arkansas Space Grant Consortium, the Arkansas Natural Sky Association donated three Orion telescopes to the Baxter County Library for patrons to check-out as a part of the Rural Library Telescope Lending Program.



## Territorial Arkansas Exhibit

The traveling exhibit *Territorial Arkansas: The Wild Western Frontier*, on loan from the Arkansas State Archives, visited the Library for five weeks in the fall. Dr. David Ware, Director of the Arkansas State Archives, presented a live lecture via Zoom discussing the exhibit.

## Apron Chronicles Exhibit

The Library exhibited a wide variety of vintage aprons with *Apron Chronicles: A Patchwork of American Recollections*. Through aprons and photographs, the exhibit shared stories that “tie” us to memories and to each other across the generations. The exhibit arrived in early 2020 and was held over through July.

## Website Rollout

A brand new Library website was introduced in September 2020 to rave reviews. The site features a more user-friendly calendar and quick-link access to Library information and resources.

## Forgotten Tales

Inspired by our partnership with the Mruk Family Education Center on Aging, Library staff rolled out a unique storytime for dementia patients and their caregivers in January 2020.

# Community Initiatives

Driving positive change  
for Baxter County



## Baxter County Early Literacy Project

### 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

In 2020, **20** children enrolled in the program and **8** completed the program. Parents and caregivers prepared their children to learn to read by reading to them and tracking their progress.

### Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

By year's end, over **722 or 36%** of children ages 0-5 in Baxter County were enrolled in the program, which mails each child one free book per month. Community support behind this program has been phenomenal.

## Little Free Libraries

Over **700** books were distributed through our Little Free Libraries in Baxter County in 2020. A new Little Free Library was installed at Mountain Station Apartments in Mountain Home, bringing the total locations to **seven** in Baxter County. The Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce hosted a special ribbon cutting for the occasion.

## After School Meals

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library distributed **1072** meals to students in partnership with the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas. The Library was one of the few locations in Baxter County actively distributing meals weekly to children in need.



# Community Support

Donors and volunteers make good things possible



## Program Sponsors

Thank you to our 2020 Library Program Sponsors. Program Sponsors were able to direct funds to the programs they valued most.



### **\$250+ Level**

#### **Life-Sized Candyland**

*Kenneth Schultz & Nancy Knopp*

#### **Stuffed Animal Sleepover**

*Kenneth Schultz & Nancy Knopp*

#### **International Games Week**

*Andrew & Christina White*

#### **Teen Banned Book Week**

*Reading Women Book Club*

#### **Yoga for Teens**

*Andrew & Christina White*

### **\$500+ Level**

#### **Scholarship Prep**

*Lynn Miller*

#### **Studio300 Makerspace**

*Shirt Shop*

#### **Teen Manga Club**

*Andrew & Christina White*

### **\$750+ Level**

#### **Adult Reading Challenge**

*Lynn & Carol Landrum and*

*Kyle & Lynn McAlister*

#### **Children's Theatre**

*Barbara Graham*

#### **Classic Saturdays**

*Barbara Graham*

### **\$1,000+ Level**

#### **Family Summer Shows**

*Mendel & Stephanie Hughes*

#### **Studio 300 Maker Space**

*Mike & Katie King Risk*

### **\$1,500+ Level**

#### **Playaway Collection**

*John & Kay Beecroft*

### **\$2,500+ Level**

#### **Children's Summer Reading**

*Friends of the Library*

#### **Library2Go Collection**

*Jeffrey & Susan Hoeper*

### **\$5,000+ Level**

#### **The Apron Chronicles Exhibit**

*Friends of the Baxter County*

*Library & Baxter County Library*

*Foundation*

#### **Literary Series**

*Friends of the Baxter County*

*Library*

\* Sponsorships for programs that did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be carried over to 2021.

\* Our apologies if we have inadvertently left your name off of this list. Please inform us of this error by contacting the Foundation office at [foundation@baxlib.org](mailto:foundation@baxlib.org).

# 2020 Foundation Donors

The Baxter County Library is extremely grateful to those who give. With a decrease in funding due to COVID-19, our 2020 donors helped keep the Library operating at optimal levels during the pandemic.

James Alter  
Barbara Amman  
Anstaff Bank  
Lindel & Stella Anthony  
Arkansas Community Foundation  
Arkansas Community Foundation, Twin Lakes  
Arkansas Imagination Library  
Arvest Bank  
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\* Included in this list are donors who have given as of December 2020.

# Volunteers Making Headlines

## Friends of the Library member Margie Kelly

During the week of October 18-24, the Baxter County Library recognized Margie Kelly, Friends of the Library member, for all of her fundraising efforts in celebration of National Friends of Libraries Week.

In August 2020, Margie passed a huge milestone, raising a total of over \$100,000 in online used book sales, since she started 17 years ago. Her first few years of sales were slow and only netted about \$200. Now, she raises upwards of \$8,000 to \$10,000 a year for the Library in sales. She spends about 90 hours a month volunteering – sorting and checking donated books at the Library, then packing and shipping sales from home.

Margie began volunteering with the Baxter County Library in 2003. Her interest in reselling books for the Library was sparked when she had an epiphany seeing her husband browsing through the books at one of the Library's used book sales. She realized many used titles for sale were priced far too low and could be sold secondhand through online retailers like Amazon and eBay for a higher price.



“ I have volunteered with the Library for over 17 years now and I am proud to support the many programs and services that the Library provides for our community here in Baxter County.”

– Margie Kelly  
Presidential Gold Service Award Recipient

The Library depends on wonderful volunteers who helped provide unmatched service and support for the entire community.

Many volunteer opportunities were suspended in March 2020 through the remainder of the year due to COVID-19.



**Library Board**

Deborah Chatman  
Robert Clarke  
Irvin DeAtley  
Carol Landrum  
Joe Miles

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Robert Clarke  
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Christina White  
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Julie Wright

**Presidential Award Recipients**

**Gold**  
Margie Kelly

**Bronze**  
Kathy Bauwens  
Carolyn Clark  
Eileen Jenkins  
Nancy Knoop  
Susan Nixon  
Margaret Park  
John Reckard  
Ginny Varn  
Neal Wheeler  
Jo Belle Zimmerman

**Volunteers**

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# Financial Support

The nonprofits that give us the opportunity to be more for the community

The Baxter County Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library make it possible to provide the community with the level of services and resources that it has come to expect from the Baxter County Library. A \$15,100 COVID-19 Adaptation Grant from the Arkansas Community Foundation helped the Library take necessary safety precautions by purchasing masks, sanitizing supplies, plexiglass partitions, stanchions, and more.

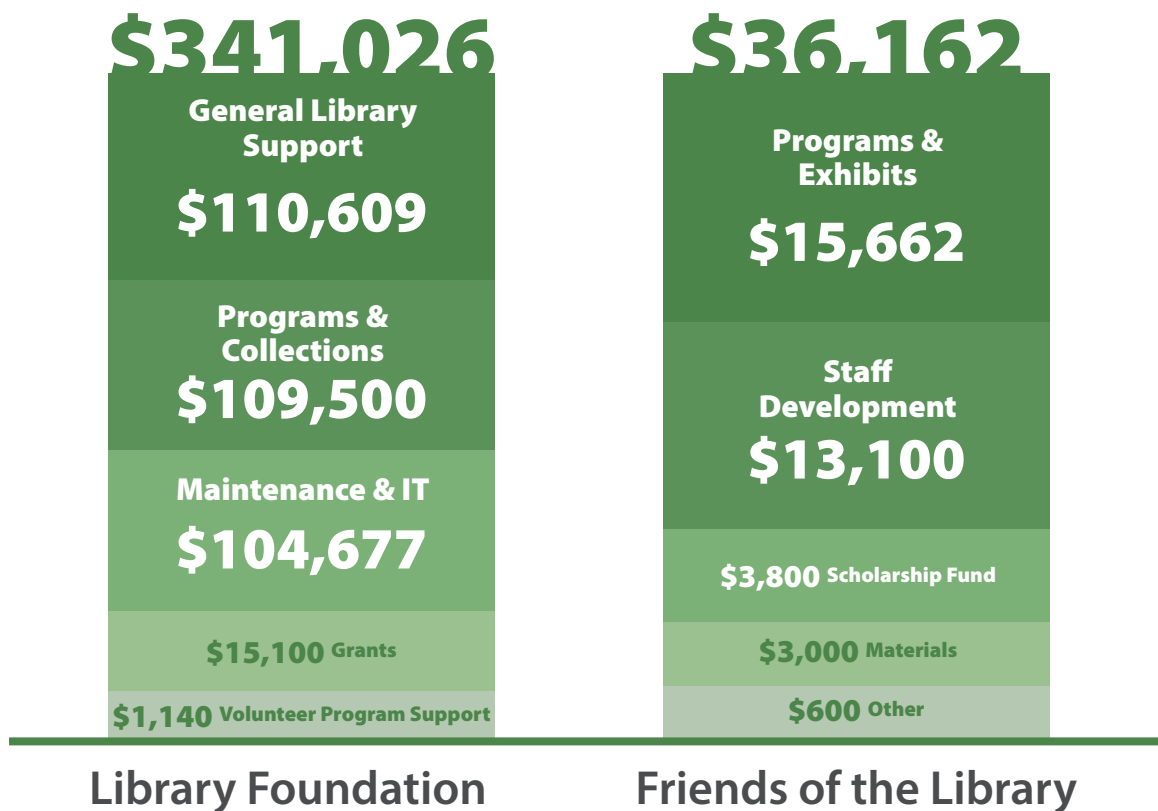


- 60% ■ **Baxter County Property Tax**
- 27% ■ **Library Foundation, Donations, Sponsorships & Grants**
- 6% ■ **State Aid**
- 4% ■ **Miscellaneous Fines, Fees, Cafe Rental, etc.**
- 3% ■ **Friends of the Library**

**2020 Library Revenue**

## Baxter County Library Foundation

The Library Foundation held its annual Ante Up for the Library Texas Hold'em Tournament in January 2020, but was unable to hold the popular Pub Night at the Library fundraising event later in the year due to COVID-19. Appeal letter campaigns in April for National Library Week and the annual Wrap it Up Year-end Giving Campaign were very successful in raising much needed funds for the Library. Library Foundation Trustees past and present gathered on Zoom to celebrate 10 years in the Donald W. Reynolds Library.



## Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library typically hold four used book sales annually to raise funds for the Library, but were only able to hold two in 2020 due to COVID-19. Their regular live and silent auctions were also affected by the pandemic. Despite the limitations, they still brought in significant revenue for the Library and managed to award their annual college scholarships – three to graduating Baxter County students and one to a Library staff member.



# Letter from the Director

The year 2020 tested our flexibility and resolve as we faced the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, but because of those challenges, it was also a year for innovation and creativity. Library staff, the Board, Foundation Trustees, Friends of the Library members, and volunteers rolled with the punches and rolled up their sleeves to continue to serve the people of Baxter County.

When we had to close our doors in March due to the pandemic, "With You at Home" became our motto as we connected with the community through innovative website resources, social media outreach, and virtual programming on Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube. We introduced more people to eBooks and online resources. We also took the opportunity to develop a brand new, user-friendly website.

With revenue down from state funding, program sponsorships, and the collection of fines and fees, we strategically trimmed the budget by cutting programming expenses and furloughing some staff. We also trimmed the materials budget and shifted a portion of the remaining funds to eBook and eAudiobook purchases to address the increased demand.

Staff got creative by developing new procedures for just about everything from handling returns, quarantining items, issuing Library cards, and offering holds pick-up service in the foyer. When we were able to reopen in June with mask requirements, social distancing, sanitizing procedures, and occupancy limits in place, people were so happy to be back in the Library.

The momentum continues into 2021. In January, we converted to a new integrated library management software, which offers more functionality as well as cost savings. In February, we hosted a community discussion with leaders serving our retiree population during COVID-19, thanks to a grant from the American Library Association. We are planning for a great summer reading program, and in the fall we will welcome an exhibit – *Reimagining America: The Maps of Lewis and Clark* from the Trail Heritage Foundation.

The library experience will continue to evolve in this ever-changing COVID-19 landscape, but along with the challenges these times present, at the Library, there will continue to be innovation and creativity in abundance.



Kim Crow Sheaner  
Library Director



Sincere appreciation goes to our amazing Library staff for their outstanding work and commitment to serving the community during COVID-19. Circulation Manager Brenda Knight (pictured front, center) retired in June 2020 after 20 years with the Library.

## Library Goals

1. Expand our reach
2. Rethink our delivery of lifelong learning
3. Make an impact on literacy
4. Enhance the Library experience
5. Align ourselves with community initiatives
6. Cultivate and improve our stewardship of resources
7. Grow staff and volunteers



[BaxterCountyLibrary.org](http://BaxterCountyLibrary.org)

(870) 580-0987 | 300 Library Hill, Mountain Home, AR 72653