



# ANNUAL DONATION AND VOLUNTEER REPORT

CALENDAR YEAR 2024

REPORT DATE: JANUARY 30, 2025

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Believe it or not, another year has come and gone. The Library saw a lot of change in 2024, with new windows, an HVAC system, and landscaping. We had a great Summer Reading program led by new Youth Librarian Erin Quada filled with adventure, including DINOSAURS! Adult Programming Coordinator Barbara Haywood, Erin, and Youth Assistant Lake Seif introduced dozens of new programs across all ages. We re-branded Art @ the Library to Holiday Market and had hundreds of people come and shop for holiday gifts. The annual face painting and Cookies with Santa was as popular as always.

We had some challenges along the way too, the biggest of which was the great flood of November 2024. The staff was resilient and handled it well, though, with minimal impact to patrons. We also wished a Happy Retirement in December to Peggy Hemerling. After more than 25 years in various roles, but mostly as the Youth Librarian, and since 2017 as the Director, Peggy had a big impact on the library, the staff, and the community.

Through it all one constant remained—our dedicated cadre of volunteers and donors. Without all of you, we could not be as successful as we are in providing meaningful services to our shared community.

We are eternally grateful and cannot thank you enough for the donations of your time and money in support of our mission. Thank you,



David Edelman  
Library Director

## DONATION SUMMARY

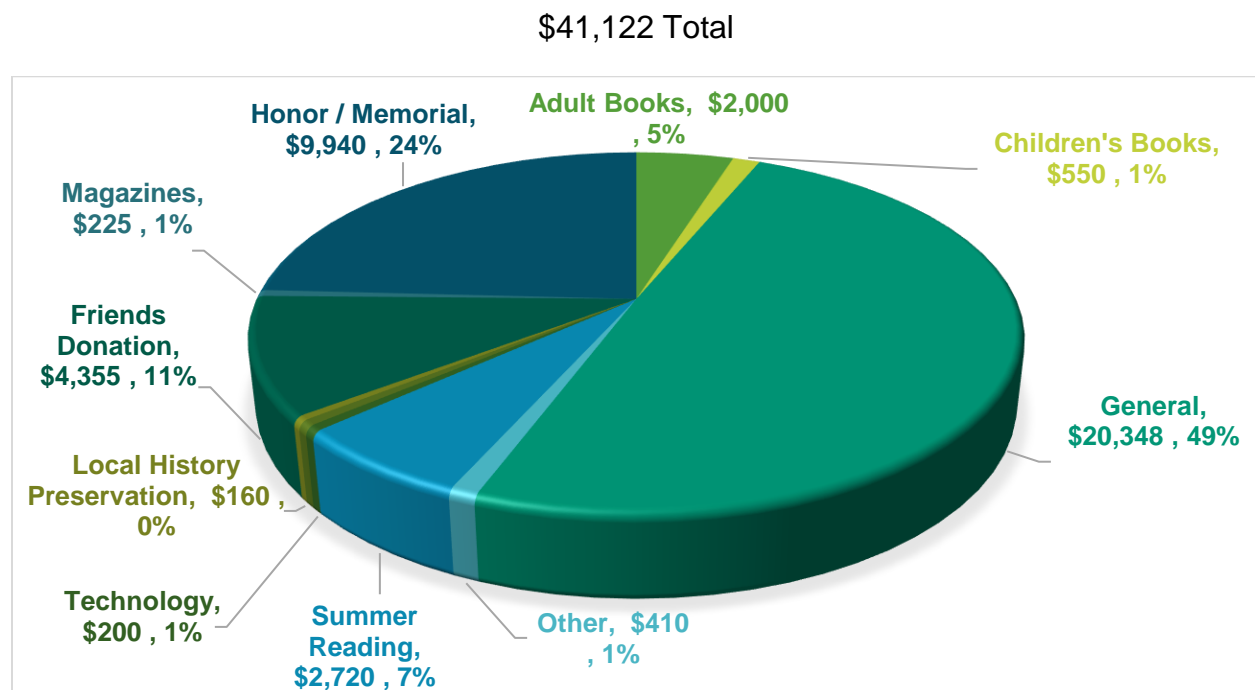
Donations from Library supporters enable HPL to:

1. Offer programs and services we could not otherwise afford.
2. Buy equipment and supplies in support of programming.
3. Make our money “go farther”.

In calendar year 2024, HPL received financial donations in excess of \$41,000. Donations towards the window replacement project totaled \$165,000 and accounted for 87% of the year’s total donations.

Donated amounts are broken out below, including a percent of the total, excluding the window funds.

## HPL 2024 DONATIONS RECAP



Some of these donations are especially notable:

- ♥ Honor and Memorial Donations of more than \$9,000:
  - Two significant library supporters passed away in 2024 and their families generously asked for donations to the library in their memory.
  - Donations for Jane Arnold, a big literacy supporter, will be used in 2025 to create a storybook walk along the river in downtown Hastings. It will start near the Library and run east towards Bliss Park.

- Donations for Bard Bloom will be used in 2025 for an undetermined project.
- ♥ Summer Reading donations of \$2,720:
  - Many other local businesses and organizations supported specific programs and initiatives including Hastings Elks Lodge #1965, Stacey Garrison DDS, Kiwanis Club of Hastings, Bright Start Pediatrics, Commercial Bank, Southside Pediatrics, and Thornapple Credit Union.
- ♥ Magazine donations of \$225 were from several library users to help us cover the ever-increasing cost of the Wall Street Journal. Thank you Jeff & Kathy D, Doris H., Karen M., Jeff & Mary D., Harold L., John N. and Barb S. for helping us keep this resource available to everyone.

## VOLUNTEER SUMMARY

We are indebted to all of our volunteers, without whom we could not provide as many services as we do for the community. In 2024 we received help from patrons, community members, and service organizations:

- ♥ Volunteers helped with landscaping maintenance and weeding.
- ♥ United Way volunteers helped with projects inside and outside for a Day of Caring.
- ♥ One volunteer helped with genealogy research and three others helped with local history organization.
- ♥ Many individuals ran programs regularly held at HPL like chess, mahjong, Dungeons & Dragons and the weekly movie night.

We especially want to thank all of the dedicated Friends of Hastings Public Library members who give so much of their time to help make our Library a special place. See more about them in the next section.

## 2024 VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

More than 15 regular volunteers and dozens of others who helped occasionally gave more than 2,350 hours of their time to the library and our community.

Some of the programs and projects they helped make possible included:

- ♥ 2024 Summer Reading Events that served more than 460 community members.
- ♥ Rain Garden and Landscaping Maintenance
- ♥ Reading is Fundamental & Reach Out and Read School Visits (over 240 hours!).
- ♥ New Item Quality Checks and Book Covering (over 220 hours!).
- ♥ Setting up and running Friends of the Library book sales.
- ♥ Dusting the Library.
- ♥ Book Re-shelving.
- ♥ Friends of the Library Book Sales.



## FRIENDS OF THE HASTINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Our Friends group does so much for us that we sometimes do not even realize they are doing it. They are very dedicated to supporting our mission and give so much of their time and energy to us, no matter the ask, we are forever grateful.

Without this group, many programs and library tasks would not happen at all, or would be much more challenging to execute, including:

- ♥ Summer Reading Events.
- ♥ The Holiday Market.
- ♥ Cookies with Santa.
- ♥ Book Re-shelving.
  - ♥ The Friends re-shelved **over 20,000 items** in 2024!



The Friends also hold many fundraising events throughout the year to support our efforts, helping us with varied items including supplies and equipment, books, program presenter fees, membership dues in local service organizations and library associations, and even training sessions and conference fees.

Some of 2024's fundraisers included:

- ♥ Two used book sales that raised \$5,000.
- ♥ Selling parking spaces at the annual Barry Roubaix bicycle race.
- ♥ The annual October Wine Pairing and Basket Auction at Seasonal Grille.
- ♥ Holiday Market raffles.
- ♥ Holiday Candy Sales: members donated and bagged candy all year that raised over \$900.

All of the Friends deserve recognition, but we especially want to recognize a few who devote so much of their time to HPL:

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| ♥ Judy K.   | ♥ Rita B.     |
| ♥ Tammy W.  | ♥ Diane H.    |
| ♥ Ellyn M.  | ♥ Kelli N.    |
| ♥ Ed S.     | ♥ Gwen M.     |
| ♥ Marcia S. | ♥ Pam S.      |
| ♥ Karen D.  | ♥ Patricia W. |
| ♥ Donna M.  | ♥ Tammy N.    |



## SUCCESS STORIES

2024 saw many successful projects accomplished with help from both the monetary donations and the time donations from our volunteers. Here are just a few of the projects.

## SUMMER READING

# ADVENTURE *BEGINS AT YOUR* LIBRARY™

2024's theme was Adventure Begins at Your Library, and everyone enjoyed many new programs. Patrons loved the stickers and patches they earned for reading that could go on their canvas bag from last year. Many local businesses donated to support summer reading programming, including Hastings Elks Lodge #1965, Stacey Garrison DDS, Kiwanis Club of Hastings, Bright Start Pediatrics, Commercial Bank, Southside Pediatrics, and Thornapple Credit Union. Pizza Hut and Dairy Queen again gave generously with coupons that we used as prizes for reading completion. There were a lot of happy kids with personal pizzas and ice cream cones last summer. Hungry Howie's also again provided a pizza per week as a random raffle drawing prize for parents who brought their kids to the library.

Ultimately, over \$2,700 was donated to directly support programs and the purchase of supplies needed to keep summer reading fun, while many volunteers gave their time to help make the programs a success.

Among other events, we hiked with 4-H and the Barry County Explorers, learned about rescue dogs, explored the human senses, held a teen murder mystery event and had a retro video game tournament.

The most exciting day was when dinosaurs came to visit! Kids of all ages, including the kids at heart who work at the library, got hands-on with several dinosaurs.

Luckily no one got eaten.



## EARLY LITERACY

We covered these initiatives last year as well, but they are critical and part of our core mission, so here they are again. HPL has two regular reading programs that we execute in partnership with local schools: Reading is Fundamental (RIF) and Reach Out and Read (ROAR). Both programs rely heavily on volunteers to visit schools and help kids with literacy skills. In 2024, 17 volunteers read 243 hours to kids across four elementary schools. We also gave out 390 books to the kids!

At the library, we still hold two separate story time events each week. Geneva W. from Barry County Great Start donated her time to help with the weekly Wednesday Itsy Bitsy Book Club, while Ellen H. and Emma O. from Pierce Cedar Creek Institute helped with periodic Friday Science Story Times. Regular weekly Friday preschool story time is also on our calendar.

## LIFT EVERY VOICE

Community member involvement is crucial to any library's success. Engaging the community, in ways they want to be engaged, is always a priority. One community member, Desiree H., approached Barbara Haywood, about holding some discussion sessions at the library related to helping different segments of the community get to know one another better and break down racial and other barriers. Out of that came Lift Every Voice, a series of community presentations & discussions, plus a book club. Largely organized and run by community members, with input and marketing support from Barbara, their early 2024 presentations were hugely popular, with more than 50 people attending multiple sessions. We expect 2025 will be even better when a new set of presentations debuts in February.

