BPL by the Numbers

LIBRARY VISITS
- 88,036 visits
- 4.08 visits per resident
- 15,328 reference questions answered

LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS
- 8,092 library card holders
- 7% increase

ITEMS CIRCULATED
- 133,182 items
- 6.18 physical & electronic items borrowed per resident

IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL PROGRAMS
- 704 programs
- 17,425 in-person & virtual program attendees
- 56% increase

PUBLIC COMPUTERS
- 20 computers
- 17,445 public computer uses
- 21% increase
- 2,247 one on one tech consultations

“BPL provides the class content, the social contact, and a feeling of belonging.”
State of the Library

Bloomfield Public Library spent the year focusing on the future, saying goodbye to the present, and putting into action plans that were years in the making. We wrote a successful $5,526 million CIF grant to keep our library buildings project moving forward. We had formal farewell parties to celebrate and say goodbye to Prosser and McMahon Wintonbury Libraries as we knew them. And finally, on Friday, June 30, 2023, we closed our doors to the public and activated the final stages of our move out process. All the while, library services to our deserving public continued, with our strategic plan guiding the way.

We increased our focus on teen services and debuted a new Teen Advisory Group, which led to an increase in circulation and new programming ideas. We went through an organizational realignment, promoting longtime BPL staffers to the positions of Assistant Directors and Site Managers. We rolled out BPL Everywhere, a series of initiatives to increase our presence where the library is needed in the community while our buildings are under construction. This expands upon our already established presence in daycares, preschools, and elementary schools. We’re here for you!

We completed our first year of using a digital program feedback form for adult programs. We received over 640 responses, with 89.3% of programs being rated 5 out of 6 or higher. Our staff continued to learn and grow, as evidenced by BPL being one of three libraries in the state to have staff chosen to join the inaugural Equity and Leadership Alliance cohort as part of the National Conference for Community Justice (NCCJ).

We continued to be more transparent and informative, as demonstrated by the delivery of BPL’s first State of the Library address and our continued focus on excellent communication across our platforms, including our weekly newsletter and social media feeds.

Keep borrowing, attending programs, getting computer help and giving us feedback. Tell us what you want from BPL. Museum passes, audiobooks, program ideas, access to digital offerings... the future is bright. We hope that our public takes the time to come and see for themselves all the things we have to offer. And finally, thank you to the Library Building Committee and the Town Council for helping us create a physical imprint for the future that will allow us to better serve our public for decades to come. Grand openings await!

Elizabeth Lane, Library Director
Ava Biffer, Chair, Library Board of Trustees

We’re here for you!
Bloomfield Public Library aims to provide all members of our diverse community with access to comprehensive services, expansive print and electronic resources, technology, and expert assistance from a caring and responsive staff. By breaking down barriers to access and opening doors to opportunity, building community, and encouraging lifelong learning, BPL works to improve the quality of life for all of our residents and strives to be the heart of our town.

Our Vision:

1. One Library Card, Endless Possibilities
   Library cards are free to Bloomfield residents of all ages! BPL's goal is for 50% of residents to have one.

2. A Library for Everyone
   Focus on excellence across the three locations serving all ages.

3. We’re Here for You!
   Ensure positive patron experience through a responsive service model and empathetic staff, with access to collections, technology, and equipment.

4. Community + Library = A Better Bloomfield
   Be the place, virtually and in-person, for people to meet, learn, and connect.

Our Mission:

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023
BPL Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Bloomfield Public Library governs the library by overseeing and recommending financial, administrative, and service objectives, and by strengthening, through advocacy, the library’s standing within the Town of Bloomfield. The board works closely with the Library Director in helping the library adhere to the values in its mission statement and achieve the goals outlined in its strategic plan.

Board of Trustees Highlights

- Signed the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Civility Pledge
- Approved collection development policy and privacy policy
- Four trustees served as members of the Library Building Committee

Helping oversee equitable library service to

8,092
Bloomfield Library Card Holders
Friends of the Library:

"We believe that excellent libraries are essential to our community."

The Friends are a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to the support of the libraries through fundraising and advocacy. They are active users of the libraries and help raise community awareness and appreciation of their services and resources.

The Friends generously supported us with our funding requests again this year, including our yearly summer reading program and our participation in the town-wide Juneteenth celebration. They also supported the rebirth of our Teen Advisory Group by funding refreshments for their programs throughout the school year.

Moving out of our buildings was a huge process, and the Friends generously supported our farewell parties in both locations, including a harpist for our Prosser party and a DJ for our McMahon Wintonbury party.

They also funded our popular Load Your Tote Campaign where we encouraged our public to take a BPL-branded tote and fill it up with borrowed library materials to make it through the transition between our old locations closing and our temporary spaces opening. While we quickly ran out of the instantly popular totes, the campaign encouraging our public to borrow lots of materials was a hit, as demonstrated by a visit by the 6th graders from Carmen Arace Middle School. We saw about 20 shelves of manga alone go out from the teen collection the day they visited in June. It was a joy to see so many kids with more than one bag of books in tow as they left the library.
## Summer Reading 2022
Bloomfield Public Library

### We registered:
569 people
We ran summer programs for:
- Children
- Teens
- Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Programs and Activities</th>
<th># of Books Read Over the Summer</th>
<th># of Program Activity Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>3002</td>
<td>2693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What did our children, teen, and adult participants have to say?

84.8% Up from last year 75.8%
- 143 more participants
- more than 700 additional books read
- Over 1000 more activity attendees

of participants strongly agree they look forward to visiting the library again
- of participants strongly agree they got help from the library this summer

In partnership with the Bloomfield Public Schools Summer Food Service Program, we distributed over 600 meals to youth aged 18 and under!
FAREWELL
TO OUR
LIBRARY
BUILDINGS

What a joy to celebrate the many memories made throughout the years. As the saying goes, the best is yet to come!
NEW PROSSER LIBRARY COMING SPRING 2025!

Thank you to the Community Investment Fund for awarding Bloomfield a $5.526 million grant to keep our buildings project moving forward!
One Library Card, Endless Possibilities

Library cards are free! Bloomfield residents of all ages from birth are eligible for a library card. Since 2019 Bloomfield Public Library card holders have increased over 27%!
BPL Online and the Digital Divide

BPL continued to address the digital divide head-on:

- Successfully applied for the Emergency Connectivity Fund that paid for 22 hotspots, 20 Chromebooks (with built-in hotspots), and internet service for 50 devices for a year
- Loaned technology devices like ChromeKits, hotspots, and launchpads directly to patrons
- Provided a robust variety of online resources at bplct.org
- Hosted virtual classes for navigating BPL Online
- Piloted Northstar Digital Literacy Program
- Participated in efforts to better address the digital divide in CT through action and participation in events with CT Libraries & Partners for Digital Equity (CTLPDE)

What have people done at BPL Online?

- Received assistance with job searching, resumes, and interview skills
- Read books, comic books, magazines, newspapers, and audiobooks
- Searched the telephone & address directory
- Learned a new language
- Researched family history and genealogy
- Watched movies and television shows
- Downloaded music
- So much more - check it out for yourself!

Former Deputy Mayor Greg Davis, BPL Board Member Leah Farrell, Director Elizabeth Lane and Assistant Director Allison Wilkos at a Digital Inclusion Week event to hear ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall (pictured below) speak at Hartford Public Library.

Articles downloaded from BPL Online databases

31,713
Adult Program Highlights

**Health**
- Black Women and Health
- Healthy Eating: Family Style
- Curb Sugar & Food Cravings
- Naloxone Training
- Medicare 101
- Improve Your Balance

**Financial**
- Protecting Your Financial Information: Identity Theft
- Side Hustles with Patrina Dixon
- Basics of Investing & Current Trends

**Legal**
- When There’s a Will, There’s a Way
- Estate Planning 101

**Civic and Social Justice**
- Why Trans Representation Matters
- Faces of Homelessness with Hands on Hartford
- Does Age Matter?

**Digital**
- Read an E-Book Week: Explore BPL Online
- Consumer Reports: Explore BPL Online
- Audiobook Appreciation Month: Explore BPL Online

Check out our literacy playlists on YouTube @bplct

West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District staff visited BPL to offer training on naloxone administration and suicide prevention.

BPL staff participated in Purple Thursday to promote domestic violence awareness, and held a Gift Card Drive to benefit Interval House.
Highlights: Adult Services

This year we saw the return of in-person programming, in addition to our wealth of virtual program offerings. We enjoyed programs at McMahon Wintonbury and Prosser, as well as at various meeting locations around town.

Millennials Read is a monthly program promoting literacy to our community members in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Partnering with the Simsbury Public Library, we explore different eateries while sharing book recommendations. If you are in this age group and love to read, join us the first Wednesday of each month!

Intergenerational events included Arm Knit a Scarf, at both library locations. Tweens, teens, and adults learned how to use their arms as knitting needles to make their own scarf to keep. On a spring day in June, folks of all ages gathered at the Town Hall Lawn to celebrate World Wide Knit in Public Day, received instructions about knitting a peony flower, and made “Come Bloom With Us” beaded flowers.
Highlights: Teen Services

BPL always aims to respond to program requests by our teens. When one of our middle school students requested that BPL start a Dungeons & Dragons group, we connected with Tabletop Gaming Center in Newington, CT to make it happen!

Interval House Community Convener Kay Munoz led workshops about teen dating violence for six Health and Physical Education classes at Bloomfield High School. Topics covered included: teen dating violence statistics, types of abuse, and unhealthy vs. healthy relationships.

BPL held a March Library Card Madness Drive during lunch waves in the Bloomfield High School cafeteria. We registered 78 students for library cards that they can now use to access resources to read, complete assignments, or conduct research.

BPL relaunched our Teen Advisory Group (TAG), with teens meeting at both our Prosser and McMahon Wintonbury locations. Each program introduced our teens to creative and team-building activities, like the Sphero robots that we borrowed from the Middletown Service Center!
Highlights: Youth Services

Our youth services team provides a variety of fun learning experiences for Bloomfield children at our libraries and in partnership with local schools. Regular walk-in storytimes with playtime at the libraries and preschool storytime visits to schools help enrich early literacy efforts. BPL further supports literacy with programs like 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten and Tween Book Club, where students always go home with books to help build their home library collections. Take Your Child to the Library Day was a wonderful celebration as we wished our library fish well in their new home and welcomed special guest Rainbow Fish!

We regularly assist teachers in registering their students for library cards and even conducted a more focused campaign at Global Experience Magnet School to ensure students as well as teachers had access to all BPL collections. Our on-demand Science Bytes series on YouTube continues to inspire budding scientists. One student used the video about a gummy bear wave machine to create a fully developed science fair project. Fandom programs like Pokémon Club help foster social development and invite kids to connect with peers with similar interests.
Highlights: Youth Services’ BookCon Event

The Bloomfield Public Library Book Conference, or BookCon, provided a chance for kids, tweens, and teens to select and go home with FREE books of all kinds (and a variety of extra goodies)! BPL partnered with a variety of publishers to provide Bloomfield's youth with exciting books and fun "swag," such as Dog Man capes from Scholastic. BPL provided conference bags, and over 180 kids and teens filled up their totes with free books.

"We have been so excited about this. Thank you for providing an event that gets kids excited about reading. Filling a bag full of books is a dream come true. It's like Christmas! Thank you publishers and thank you BPL!"

"I think this is a beautiful idea. Reading is very important and to allow that important aspect in life to keep going for the children is wonderful! Thank you!"

"This was amazing. PLEASE keep doing this!"

"Great idea! Way to encourage readers!"
Visiting Youth Authors

BPL loves bringing authors to our community! With the generous support of Duncaster Retirement Community, BPL was able to bring comic author/illustrator Nathan Hale all the way from Utah to Bloomfield. Perhaps best known for his graphic series *Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales*, based on historic U.S. events, he spoke to approximately 500 Bloomfield students in grades 4-6. BPL awarded 36 of his graphic novels to students at Metacomet School, Carmen Arace School, and Global Experience Magnet School leading up to the event. Frequent feedback from attendees: "This was the best author event I have ever attended!"

Local Bloomfield preschool teacher Mary Munson shared her newly published picture book with families. Kids participated in a variety of book-themed activities, including cookie decorating, art collages, and a scavenger hunt through the Prosser Children's room. She even autographed her book for fans!

Kimarley Henry, who writes the “CHAD” comics for the *Bloomfield Messenger*, gave a virtual talk for children discussing the writing process as well as illustration techniques.

When BPL found out that local 10-year old, Yonatan Axelrad, had self-published a nonfiction book about tardigrades, we knew we had to have a virtual chat with him! Find the chat on our YouTube channel.
Community Partners Highlights

We held several great partnership programs with Filley Park. Our Nature Walks in Filley Park series was a chance to introduce our public to the walking trails. The Great Puzzle Swap was a multi-generational program that brought the community together to donate and obtain new jigsaw puzzles.

BPL once again partnered with the Lions Club for their Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Book Drive. The Lions Club donation allowed BPL to add both African-American-themed and Latinx-themed fiction and nonfiction to our teen collections.

Wintonbury Historical Society programs are available to view on our YouTube Channel. Popular topics this year included: The Flood of 1955, Early Houses of Wintonbury Parish and Bloomfield, Slavery in Wintonbury, and On The Line in Bloomfield: How Schooling, Housing, and Civil Rights Shaped Hartford and its Suburbs.
Community Partners: We Thank You

Alliance for Bloomfield’s Children
Alzheimer’s Association, CT Chapter
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Auerfarm
Avon Free Public Library
Avon Senior Center
Bloom Natural Health
Bloomfield Access Television (BATV)
Bloomfield Adult & Continuing Education
Bloomfield Beautification Committee (BBC)
Bloomfield Board of Education
Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce
Bloomfield Conservation, Energy, and Enviro. Cmte. (CEEC)
Bloomfield Fire Department
Bloomfield Lions Club
Bloomfield Messenger
Bloomfield Parks, Recreation, & Leisure Services
Bloomfield Public Schools
Bloomfield Rotary Club
Bloomfield Senior Services
Bloomfield Social and Youth Services
Blue Hills Fire Department
Bristol Health
Canton Public Library
Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
Capital Workforce Partners
Central Connecticut State University (CCSU)
Commuter Action Group
Connecticut Department of Banking
Connecticut Dept. of Energy and Enviro. Protection (DEEP)
Connecticut Forest & Park Association
Connecticut Humanities Council
Connecticut Library Association (CLA)
Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC)
Connecticut Libraries & Partners for Digital Equity (CTLPDE)
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
Connecticut State Library
Cora J. Belden Library, Rocky Hill
Creative Hearts
CTRides/ CT Transit
Czepiga Daly Pope & Perri
Dignity Grows Hartford
Doll’s House Foundation
Duncaster
Dun-Land-Woods Garden Club
Eastern CT State University (ECSU)
Edward Jones
Farmington River Watershed Association
First Academy
First Congregational
Family Resource Center (FRC)
Friends of Auerfarm Scenic Reserve
Friends of Filley Park
Friends of the Bloomfield Public Library
Geissler’s Supermarket
Girl Scouts of Connecticut
Hands On Hartford
Harris Capital Advisors
Headstart
Interval House
Jewish Book Council
Library Connection, Inc.
Mandell JCC Book Festival
Metric Financial
National Healthcare
National Voter Registration Day
New Creations
Old St. Andrews Church
Park Watershed
Reading Education Assistance Dogs (READ)
School Readiness Council
Seabury
Simsbury Public Library
Stop & Shop Supermarket
Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy
Town of Bloomfield
United Way
USA Financial & Tax Services, LLC
West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District
West Hartford Public Library
Within Coaching, LLC
Wintonbury Historical Society

“We couldn’t do this without you!”
Collection Highlights

Manga are comics or graphic novels originating from Japan. Our manga collections (Juvenile, Middle Grade, and Teen) continue to be an incredibly popular draw for youth. Teens and adults come from all across the state to borrow from our wide variety of series. During class visits by Bloomfield 6th graders in June, we estimate that students borrowed approximately 1,000 manga and graphic novels to read over the summer!

Working in partnership with Bloomfield school staff, we have expanded our collection of youth VOX books, which are audiobooks that have VOX readers inside the printed books. Our bilingual collection now includes Arabic, French, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Vietnamese languages.

BPL added a Hiking Kit to our Library of Things. Inspired by our annual Trails Day program, staff gathered popular items, conveniently available for check out in one backpack: binoculars, maps, birding guides, headlamps, a GPS, and a compass.
Leading by Example

BPL staff continue to lead by example and in professional capacities both in Bloomfield and beyond. We want to create best practices and share them far and wide!

- Rachel Tonucci was appointed Co-Chair of the CT Library Consortium Social Justice Roundtable.

- Sara Ray was appointed Co-Chair of the CT Library Consortium Adult Programming Roundtable.

- At the New England Library Association (NELA) Conference in New Hampshire, Allison Wilkos and Elizabeth Lane delivered a presentation centered on library marketing.

- Allison Wilkos graduated from the 2022 NELA NELLS Emerging Leaders program.

- At the joint CT Association of School Librarians & CT Educator’s Computer Association, Inc. Conference, Heidi Moon delivered a presentation titled “What Your Public Library Can Do For You.”

- Nicole Dolat was interviewed by the CT State Library Division of Library Development (DLD) for their YouTube series CT Pages, where she shared the experience of creating Science Bytes, a regular series of on-demand STEM videos and activities that were launched during the pandemic.


- Rachel Tonucci served on a CT State Library DLD panel of expert book discussion leaders sharing ideas and tips for facilitating social justice book clubs. Rachel and Elizabeth Lane created a series of videos for DLD explaining how to create the foundation for social justice work in your library and following through with action items.

- Quincey Gill and Chris Silloac presented “Power to the People: Technology Planning That Puts Users First” at the Connecticut Education Network (CEN) conference.
Our Team

The Staff of Bloomfield Public Library

1. Allison Wilkos
2. Michael Tobias
3. Sara Ray
4. Tom Nicotera
5. Dejah Murray
6. Elizabeth Johnson
7. Brooke Lyman
8. Lorri Huddy
9. Nicole Dolat
10. Sharon Emborsky
11. Shantel Isaacs
12. Sheila McCallum
13. Victor Giner
14. Rachel Tonucci
15. Joni Celmer
16. Carol Walters
17. Diahl Seccareccia
18. Jean-Michel Sibille
19. Quincey Gill
20. Chris Siloac
21. Melanie Bazer
22. Ricardo Hailey-Harper
23. Katherine Battle
24. Mara Whitman
25. Heidi Moon
26. Elizabeth Lane
27. Demoi Wright
28. Patricia McGuire
29. Zuzana Meistrick
30. Jean Rawlings
We’re Here For You!
Feedback From Our Patrons

Nick Caruso
Admin 44m · R

Today was eye-opening. While attending the CEN Conference (Connecticut Education Network) I sat in on a workshop presented by the Bloomfield Public Libraries staff members, Christopher Siloac and Quincy Gill, on the new library projects. While focused on technology, the presenters discussed how all changes were focused on improving the customer experience in the Bloomfield Public Libraries. I was both thrilled with the vision of what the new libraries are setting out to do, as well as the professionalism of the staff. I think the new buildings will serve the town well.

Rob and I just successfully added Kanopy to our TV and linked it to my Kindle Fire. Can’t wait to dive in!

Teen Advisory Group Teen:
I have always loved the Bloomfield Public Libraries and I want to be a part of making it better for the next generation of young people reaping the benefits of the library.

You are not only a spring in the desert, but a veritable oasis.
Gratefully, Edith

Outstanding staff, extraordinarily kind and caring. I love the Bloomfield Library for this reason! Thank you.

Thank you for the great programs this summer! We appreciate all that you do for our students.
-Paul Guzzo, Principal of Metacomet School

Excellent program! You and the other library staff are exceptionally sensitive and thoughtful people and Bloomfield is fortunate to have you in our library.
-Al

I want to just celebrate whoever is organizing the programs at the library. Thank you for the creative and innovative programs.
-- Doris

This BookCon was amazing; you guys should do this more often. :) - Jazzanae
OMG! This was amazing! -Zach (8 years old)

Yoga with Pia improves the quality of my life; it helps me develop skills to cultivate a healthy body and flexible spirit while I mature as a “senior”. -Margaret

Thank you and the staff for continuing to purchase, offer, and showcase books and other materials in all departments, uniting us in the fight against censorship. I applaud you all for this. Kindly, Linda

Gracias
Thanks for my Summer Reading Program.
att:Emmanuel P.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023
VISIT OUR TEMPORARY LOCATIONS

**BPL@ the Atrium**
1300 Hall Boulevard, Bloomfield
Former MetLife Building, Cigna Campus
MON/TUE 10 AM-6 PM,
WED/THU 10 AM-8 PM, FRI 10 AM-2 PM

**Tech Express**
330 Park Avenue, Room 117
Human Services Building

**Full-Service Library:** Collections, Technology, Children's Play Area

**FOLLOW US**
Facebook Instagram YouTube

**COMING SOON** A New Library For Bloomfield!

Need a Library Card?
Click here to register online!

We're here for you!