



TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
SAM T. WILSON LIBRARY

# Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2022-2023



11968 Walker Street, Arlington TN 38002

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# Letter From The Library Director

**More than just books. Those words, displayed in the building, capture the spirit of the Sam T. Wilson Library.**

Your local Library provides access to information, materials, and a host of educational and entertaining programs. Resources that enrich the lives of everyone in our community are available every day, and always for free, at the Library.

Arlington is a fast-changing community, and during Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023, the Sam T. Wilson Library kept pace. We expanded services and outreach, but our mission remains the same: to remain committed to providing services carefully tailored to the needs of our patrons.

New Library staff brought vibrant energy to the Library, enhancing existing and new programs. Our new children's services staff, raised in Arlington with childhood memories of the Library, brought a deep connection to the local community and Library users.

The year also brought new, extended offerings, including bilingual storytimes, a new Teen Advisory Board (TAB), and expanded partnerships with area schools to assist with their growing literacy needs. The annual summer reading program, All Together Now, saw incredible enthusiasm for expanding literacy skills while enjoying great programs and books!

Thank you for making this FY2022-2023 another year to remember. The Sam T. Wilson Public Library staff and I are grateful for the commitment and support of the Town of Arlington, the Library Advisory Board, the Library Friends of Arlington, Library Systems & Services, and the many local partnerships that make our Library an essential resource and the heart of the Arlington community.

We are honored to serve this vibrant community and are excited for the future!

**Lisa Lance | Library Director**



# Programming & Outreach

## EARLY LITERACY



The Library is a community hub, a place for all ages to learn and grow together!

While the Library space is limited, staff maintained partnerships with other Town departments to enhance the lives of community members.

Arlington's youngest residents were provided crucial early literacy and social skills that helped set them up for a successful path to school through programs including:

- **Tiny Tots Lapsit** – A weekly virtual storytime outreach program, Tiny Tots allowed our tiniest friends to listen to books and sing songs.
- **Read with Me Storytime** – A continuing weekly virtual storytime introduced in mid-2020 has grown to include guest readers from community leaders, Town staff, and Library Friends and Board members. This special program, tailored for better interaction for toddlers and preschoolers, helped readers visualize the book and follow along more easily, aiding in re-reading skill development.
- **Bedtime Storytime** – A weekly virtual storytime with a longtime Library history, Bedtime Storytime provided many benefits to early literacy, relieving anxiety and facilitating fun story listening for little ones to.
- **Preschool/Toddler Tuesday Storytimes** – This program of early-literacy-based storytimes was held offsite year-round at the Arlington Safe Room. These storytimes involved reading great books along with early literacy and social skill development through plenty of wiggles and giggles. The addition of bilingual story reading provided additional outreach for attendees and created family interactions and new family meet and greets for the growing community.



LAB member, Amanda Carrico & son Matthew, virtual Read With Me Storytime

# CHILDREN TO ADULTS

Our Library is a great place to be in Arlington for children and teens, with a wide range of programs and creative spaces to learn and grow.

The Library offered monthly book clubs for multiple ages, from elementary students to adults. The weekly STEM program engaged early elementary to middle school ages with a fun and interactive way to learn about science, technology, engineering, and math. Homeschoolers enjoyed book club opportunities and a place to meet and engage with others. The new Teen Advisory Board gave students the opportunity to discuss ideas for improving Library services for Arlington teens. Reading Buddies, a new program, helped younger readers enjoy reading all year long with valuable literacy skills. Other sought-after programs in FY2022-2023 included the for-all-ages and all-skill-levels Chess Club. Monthly art programs for kids and adults involved art literacy and emphasized sharing creativity. Throughout the year, these programs fostered connection in the growing Arlington community.



Chess Club



Elementary Book Chat

## ANNUAL EVENTS

In FY2022-20223, the Library participated in annual community events including Christmas on the Square and Arlington in April. Staff offered storytimes for those waiting in line for carriage rides, distributed hundreds of craft kits, registered new members for Library cards, and raised awareness of the many programs and resources the Library has to offer. The Library Friends sponsored the Letters to Santa Station, where nearly 250 kids mailed Santa letters from the porch of the historic Arlington Post Office. Participants assisted Santa's elves by sending certificates authenticating their placement on Santa's nice list.

During the annual Arlington in April event, the Library Friends held a successful book sale that provided support for Library programs. The Friends also held a fall book sale held in the Library parking lot, raising funds used to supplement the community partners' funds donated to the Library's summer reading programs.

Library staff, local community leaders, and teachers celebrated Read Across America Week in March, reading to students at Donelson Elementary School. The joint venture is an annual event made to share the joy of literacy with students.

The Library's annual summer reading program is a vital asset, eliminating learning and reading loss while remaining fun and interactive. The 2023 summer reading program saw record numbers with **656 registrations** and more than **2400 in program attendance**. All ages were excited about reading, reflected in the more than 261,000 minutes of reading from children through teens and 695 books read by adults. The Library Friends of Arlington and community partners sponsor summer reading each year. This year, sponsorships included donations from more than **25 community partners** that provided over **750 level awards and top reader awards to participants**. The donations and financial support allowed the Library to host interactive programs, including children's book illustrator, Rich Davis, two programs by Dixon Gallery & Gardens, a fine art museum and public garden providing innovative programs in arts and horticulture, and Runaway Puppet Theater, which spread stories of kindness. Andi Lehman of Life with Animals presented Animals in Story and Song to a crowd of more than 200 attendees waiting in line for a hands-on experience with some incredible critters and predators. Shelby Wildlife Ranger Overstreet introduced kids to a young falcon and king snake for an up-close experience.



Read Across America, Donelson Elementary 1st Grade



LFA Fall Book Sale Oct 2022

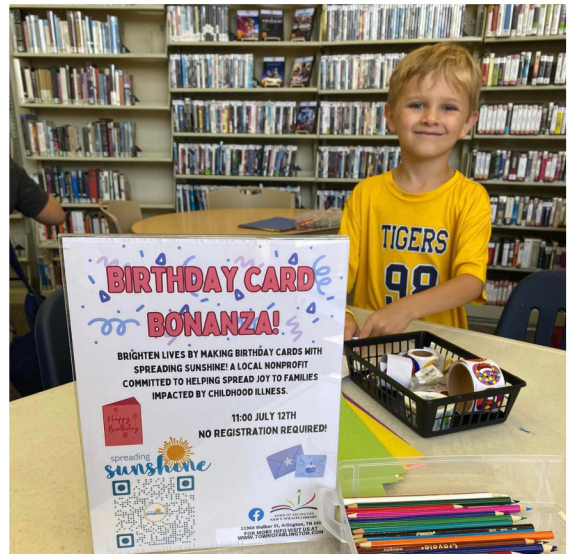
Summer reading programs offered at the Library were fully registered at every scheduled event. Programs included Monday Bingo, Pen Pals with Arlington Senior Center, Friends Trivia for kids and adults, and Birthday Card Bonanza, a program with Spreading Sunshine, a local nonprofit that spreads sunshine to families impacted by childhood illness. These programs and others all promoted the 2023 summer reading theme, *All Together Now*.



Pen Pals with Arlington Senior Center



Adult Trivia Club



Birthday Card Bonanza for local Sunshine Boxes

A local partner in literacy, the First Citizens National Bank of Arlington served as an annual sponsor of both the summer reading and winter bookmark design contest. All ages participated; eight overall winners were selected by the Bank among 81 entries. A total of 16 winning bookmarks, including the readers' choice awards, were added to the Library bookmark collection available to the public. The Bank proudly displayed a winner's board and offered copies of the winning bookmarks to their patrons, promoting the offerings of the Library.



**First Citizens National Bank, 2023 Winter Bookmark Contest  
(3rd annual sponsorship)**

**First Citizens National Bank,  
Summer Reading 2023  
Bookmark Contest  
(4th annual sponsorship)**

Fine forgiveness programs were offered during the year and included Supply and Forgive, which encouraged patrons with overdue fines to donate school supplies to local students in need. This unique program served our Arlington community for both Library patrons and students, removing a barrier-of-use for checking out materials. Nearly 100 items were donated in FY2022-2023, all for the exchange of waiving overdue fines. Library fine forgiveness continued into the holidays with the 3rd Annual Food for Fines Forgiveness program. Through this program, fines were waived for patrons who donated canned goods to the Library. The local food pantry received more than 125 food items, making the holidays brighter for those in need.



**Fine Forgiveness, Supply & Forgive 2022**



**3rd Annual Food  
For Fines  
Forgiveness  
program**

# Flexibility: Key to a Growing Community

**FY2022-2023 highlighted the Library's importance to the community. Staff continually got creative and further met the needs of patrons throughout the year.**

The Library offered expanded services through print and digital collections and a variety of resources that connected people to information and other people. With extensive experience in children's literature, our new children's coordinator provided a wealth of readers advisory to our avid readers, engaging even the most reluctant readers. These key resources not only added value to the circulation of our collection, but also indicated commitment to our community's future.

The Library offered many programs for Arlington residents, including the Kids Zone DIY Craft Day occurring during the school year. This high-in-demand monthly event allowed kids to select take-and-make-at-home kits. Multiple themed craft kits were provided the second Saturday of each month, with over 3200 kits distributed this fiscal year. A variety of kits were designed for preschool to middle school-aged students, assisting in their development of fine motor skills.

Book clubs for all ages were a staff favorite. The monthly book discussions encouraged critical thinking and deeper engagement with stories. Book clubs for younger readers continued literacy development, and all clubs provided a place to make new community connections. Other programs that were offered collaboratively with the Arlington Senior Center included a memoir writing class with Memphis Creative Aging and a monthly trivia club - a friendly competition on books, movies, and TV shows.

TAB met monthly to share ideas and information regarding programs, collection, and visions for improving teen services in the community. Teens also earned volunteer experience and service hours. Our Library continues to serve as a great place to make new friends for teens, children, and adults alike.



**STEM Program**



**Tween & Teen Book Club, July**

The annual Seed Library was offered to patrons from February through June, or as long as supply lasted. Patrons checked out up to five seed packets, selecting from vegetables, herbs, and assorted flowers. The Library offered multiple handouts to assist customers in gardening success. In FY2022-2023, over 500 seed packets were donated from the American Seed Corp., Baker Creek Heirloom, Gurney's Seed & Nursery, and many other donors.

The Library partnered with Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of The Stars & Stripes Forever. For the holiday season, a Christmas tree decorated by Emma Rose and Caroline was displayed to honor the Zachariah Davies Chapter, the Old Stage Road Society, and the Children of the American Revolution.

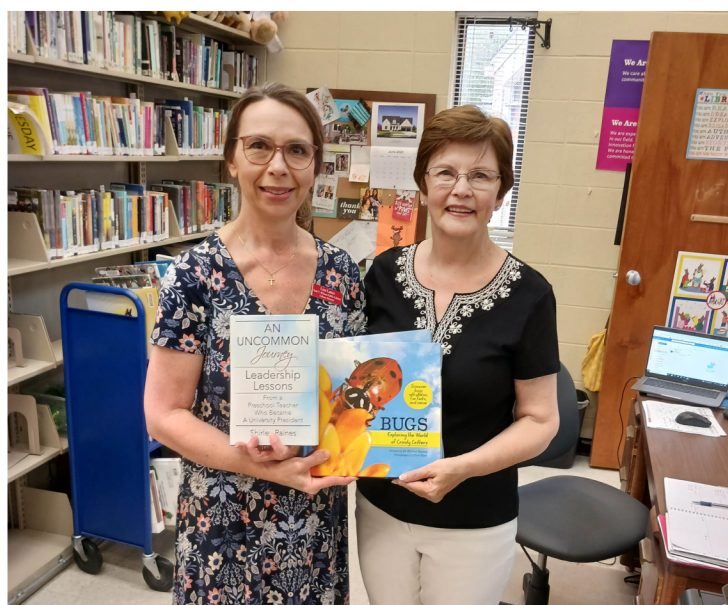
Library connections expanded beyond the local community; we were honored to be visited by Dr. Shirley Raines, the first female president of the University of Memphis. Dr. Raines selected the Sam T. Wilson Public Library to show her appreciation of the local library and what it means to the surrounding community. Tony Frye, TOA employee and former student of U of M, donated four children's books written by Dr. Shirley Raines to the Library.



Seed Library 2023 (500+ donated seed packs)



Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) are Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of, "The Stars & Stripes Forever"



Dr. Shirley Raines : Author and first female President University of Memphis



Community connections are also made through the Library Friends of Arlington, who serve as a significant extension to program support throughout the year for all ages. They are known for providing financial support for children's programs and summer reading programs. For the second year, the Friends expanded their support and sponsored 25 senior non-resident library cards during FY2022-2023. Library cards are not required for attending programs, although several senior cardholders prefer reading print books. The Friends' fall book sale has become an annual event favorite; nearly \$2000 was raised to support the Library in 2022. The Library Friends were recognized during the ribbon cutting by Patriot Bank for their years of service and support of the Sam T. Wilson Public Library.



Library Friends of Arlington (President Linda Ollio) recognized by Patriot Bank for their years of service and support of your local library

**Sam T. Wilson Public Library**

In Partnership with

**Library Friends of Arlington**

TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
SAM T. WILSON LIBRARY

**Now offering**

**Senior Non-Resident Library Card Sponsorship**

Want to join a great Library? Age 50 and older?  
Live outside of the Town of Arlington city limits?

The Library Friends of Arlington sponsorship program pays the non-resident library card fee for the first year. Limited cards sponsored per year.  
Contact the Library for details.

**Membership Highlights:**

- 24/7 Online Access
- Bestsellers
- eBooks \* eAudiobooks \* eMagazines
- Audiobooks
- DVDs
- Free Classes & Programs
- Free Computer Use (with active card)
- Free Wi-Fi
- & more

**JOIN TODAY!**

Free library cards for  
Town of Arlington residents  
with proof of town residence!

Non Resident Fee - \$50  
Senior (age 50 & older) - \$25

Sam T. Wilson Public Library \* 11968 Walker Street \* Arlington TN \* 901.867.1954

# Library Statistics

JULY 2022 - JUNE 2023



**2,064**

PUBLIC SERVICE  
HOURS



**19,514**

LIBRARY VISITS



**7,635**

WEBSITE VISITS



**221**

CHILDREN'S  
PROGRAMS



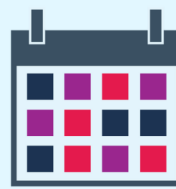
**4,861**

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM  
ATTENDANCE



**3,281**

PROGRAM KITS (KIDS  
ZONE, OUTREACH)



**466**

TOTAL PROGRAMS



**5,947**

TOTAL PROGRAM  
ATTENDANCE



**18,017**

ELECTRONIC  
MATERIALS  
CIRCULATION



**35,247**

PHYSICAL ITEMS  
CIRCULATION



**53,264**

TOTAL  
CIRCULATION



**668**

NEW BORROWERS



**3,693**

TOTAL BORROWERS



**6,189**

TOTAL REFERENCE  
QUESTIONS



**896**

USE OF COMPUTERS