



Director's Report—Debbie Bird

Changes

We are once again onto a new City Administrator, Justin Schoenemann. On his second day, he made a point of visiting all of the City's facilities, including the library. He indicated that his two-year-old son will be participating in children's programming here at the library, as soon as "life" stabilizes a bit. Currently, he is living in DeForest and while his wife hunts for work, grandparents are watching young Lincoln. He plans to move to Portage, once he finds satisfactory housing. I was able to introduce him to the Leadership Team and some of the staff. He was approached by patrons and had his first view of the many facets that the library has, including the Summer Lunch Program, library as a cooling center, remodeled changes and those on the come.

The Summer Lunch Program has been more of a focus for me this year than ever before. Volunteer support has been down, Summer Lunch Committee membership has been drastically reduced from eight to three members, the Wisconsin Dell's School District fired their current Food Service Director, Penny Kiefer's health deteriorated—her death profoundly impacted the operation and production of the program. Now, as the twelfth Summer Lunch Program nears its completion there is promise of continued support from the Youth Center and Kiwanis, additional parties willing to serve on the committee and the strong support of our own trustee, Klay Vehring, who was instrumental this year in helping with delivery and organization and maintenance of the day-to-day program.

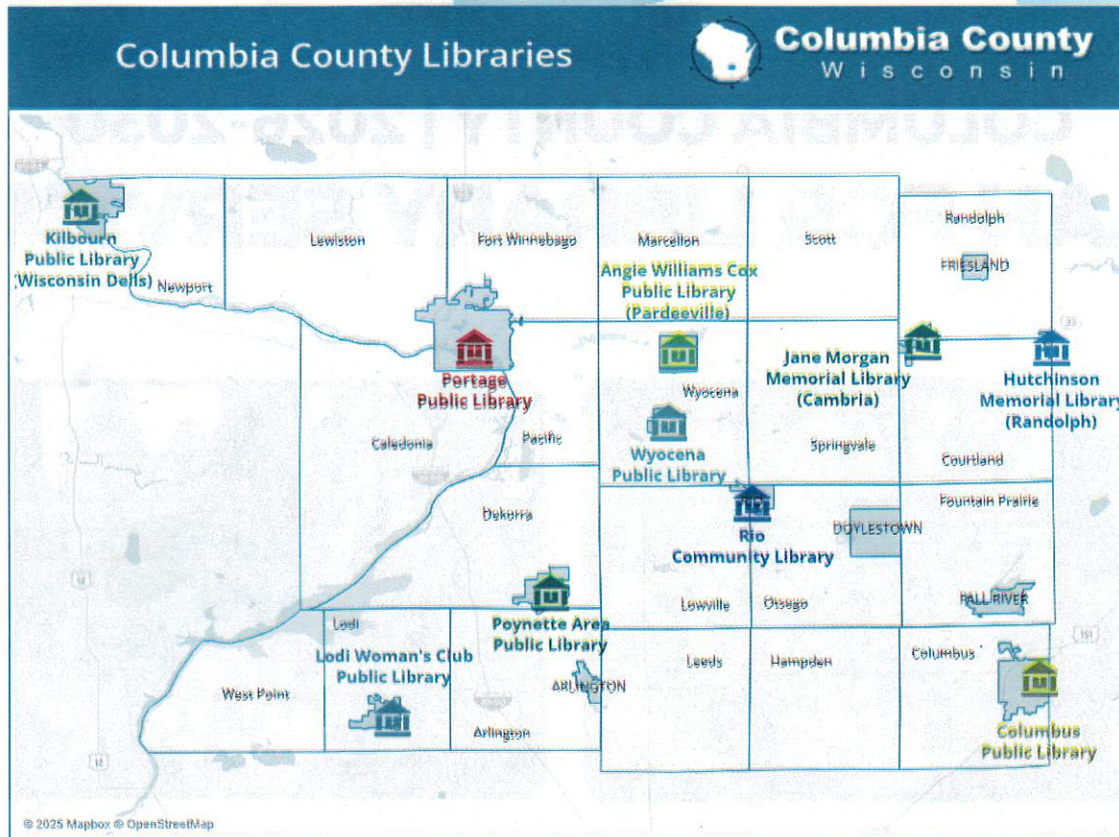
Sirsi-Dynix will become our new library catalog in 2026. I served on the ILS Lead Workgroup for two-years in order to review, evaluate, and recommend the future online catalog. SCLS staff have started working on the migration process to SirsiDynix Symphony. The go-live date is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2026. Changing catalogs requires an intensive number of staff trainings and then eventually patron trainings. However, I feel confident that everyone will win, in the end, as this product is infinitely better than our current library catalog. It provides much of the Amazon-like features that most people take for granted, but was missing from the current catalog.



COLUMBIA COUNTY | 2026-2030 PLAN FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

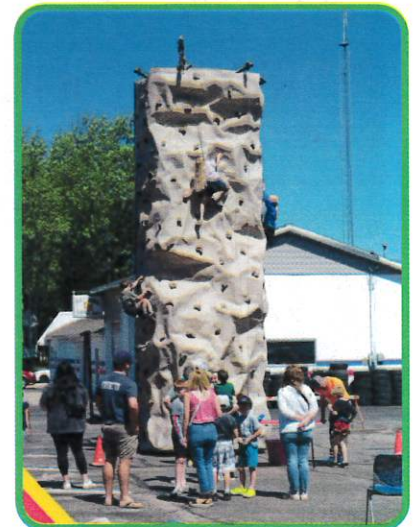


INTRODUCTION



The mission of the Columbia County Library Board is to advocate for public libraries and to ensure quality library service for all residents of Columbia County.

Library service to the residents of Columbia County is provided by: Cambria, Columbus, Lodi, Pardeeville, Portage, Poynette, Randolph, Rio, Wyocena and Wisconsin Dells (a joint library with the village of Lake Delton in Sauk County). The Columbia County Library Board meets bimonthly, traveling on a rotating basis to each county public library. Library directors also meet bimonthly. Both groups meet to discuss updates, concerns, funding, accessibility, technology, library services and cooperative programming.



COLUMBIA COUNTY

- Columbia County, Wisconsin with 765.6 square miles of land area is the 34th largest county in Wisconsin by total area.
- The total population according to the 2020 census is 58,490.
- Hispanic and Latino race is most prevalent after Caucasian.
- Currently the largest population is for ages 55-64 years of age.
- The median household income is \$82,792.
- Total households number 24,231; total housing units available are 26,565.
- The employment rate is at 63.4%.

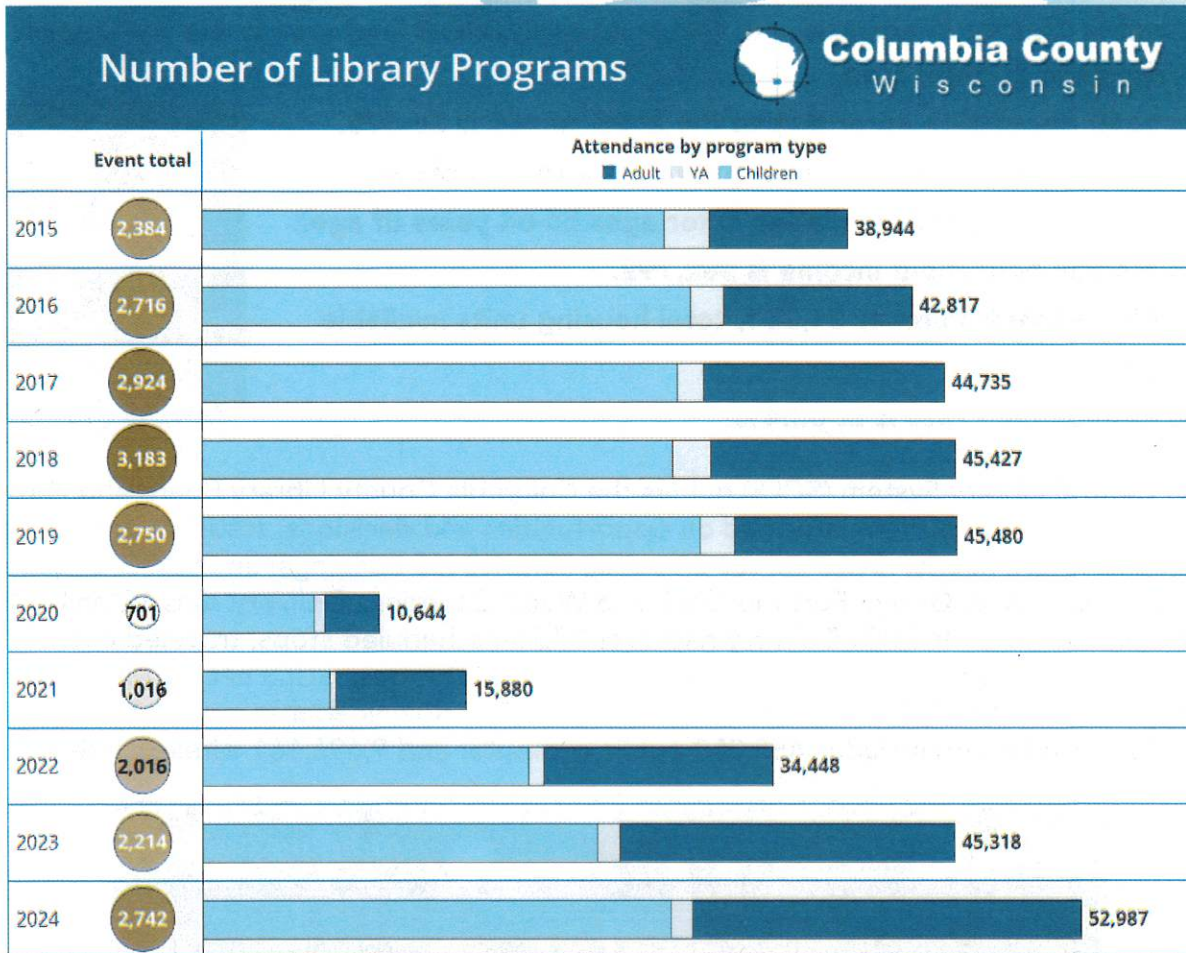


The South Central Library System (SCLS) guides the Columbia County Library Board and library directors, groups, keeping them informed on opportunities and decisions, statistics and strategies for growth and future needs. SCLS serves 54 public libraries (65 buildings) and 924,372 residents in Adams, Columbia, Dane, Green, Portage, Sauk and Wood Counties. Delivery runs 12 daily routes to our member libraries. In 2024 Delivery had over 17,250 scheduled stops, traveled over 400,000 miles and moved over 257,000 bins of materials to member libraries. SCLS has 360,934 registered borrowers, circulates 7,892,397 physical items and 2,126,387 downloadable materials, includes 4,999,042 library visits and includes 455,250 public computer and 9,696,161 wireless internet uses.

Library Services 2024		Columbia County Wisconsin	
Library Visits		WiFi Connections	
328,880		501,385	
Library Assistance		Computer Use	
46,812		28,911	
E-content Use		Items Borrowed	
105,911		382,806	
7.4% children's materials		42.7% children's materials	

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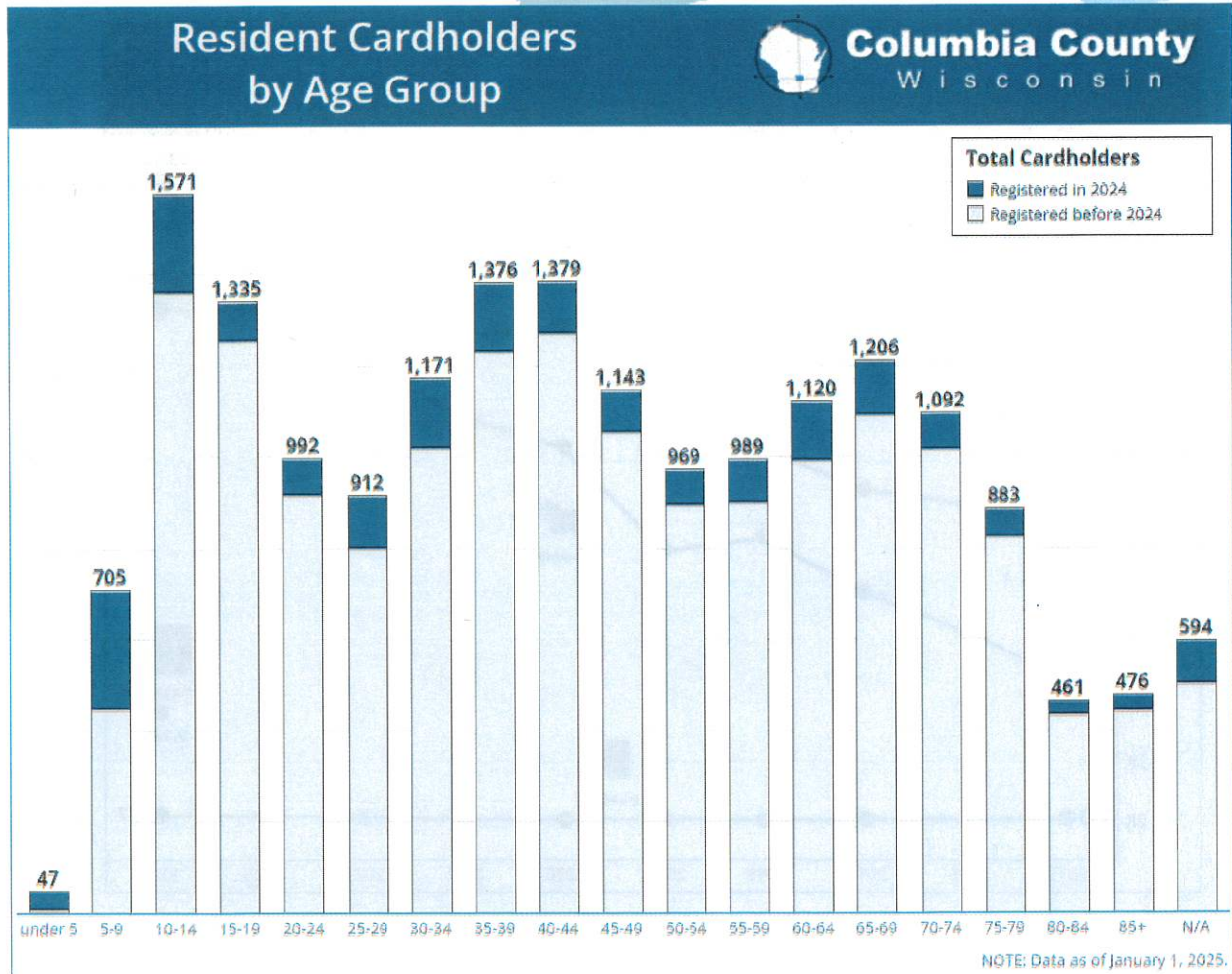
LIBRARY PROGRAMS



- The benefits of library programming reach residents of all ages.
- Summer reading programs encourage reluctant readers to be drawn in by the activities and prevent summer slide.
- Book groups encourage reading to become a lifelong habit.
- Broad-based children programming supports personal and educational growth and nurtures curiosity.
- Programs generate interest in local communities and encourage involvement.
- Programming meets the educational, cultural and recreational needs of county residents.
- Engagement with other organizations leads to networking, enrichment and reaching all populations.
- Library programming promotes collaboration, hands-on learning, problem solving and the creative process.
- Library homeschooling programs offer curriculum support, supplemental materials, and opportunities for social interaction.

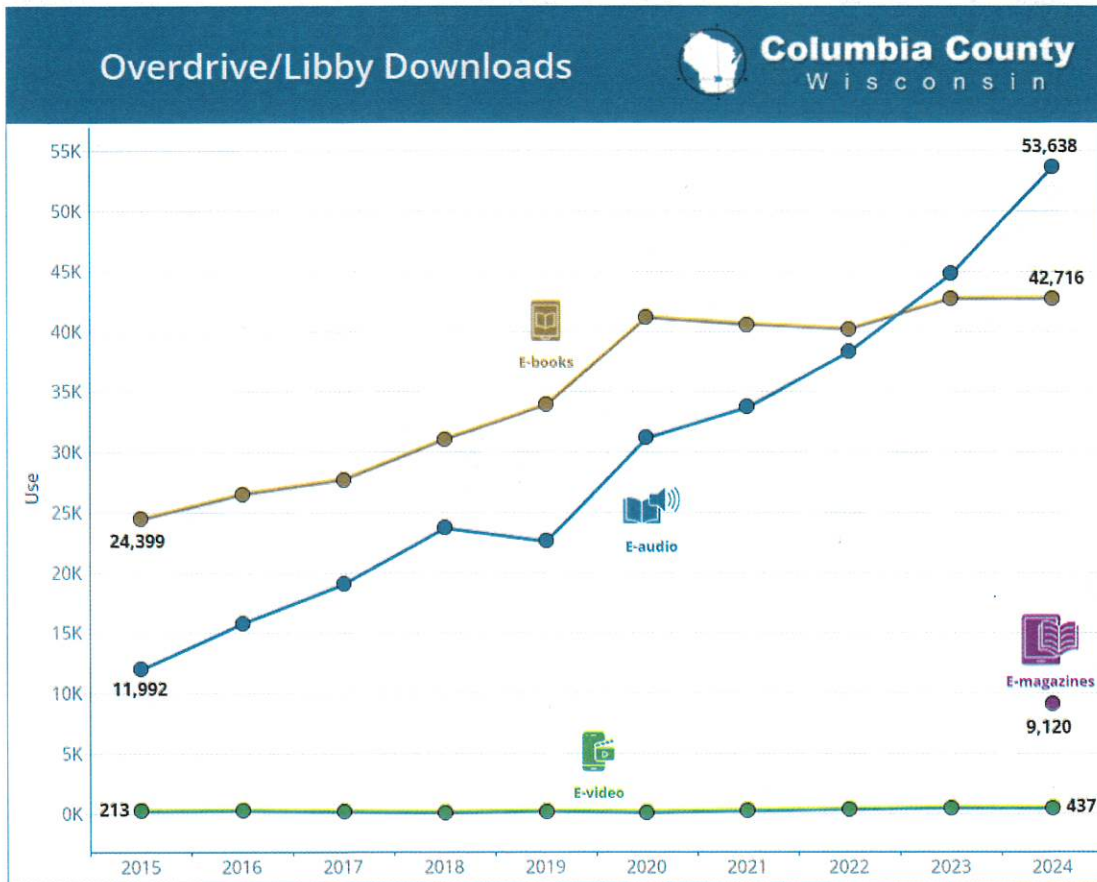


CARDHOLDERS



OVERDRIVE/LIBBY

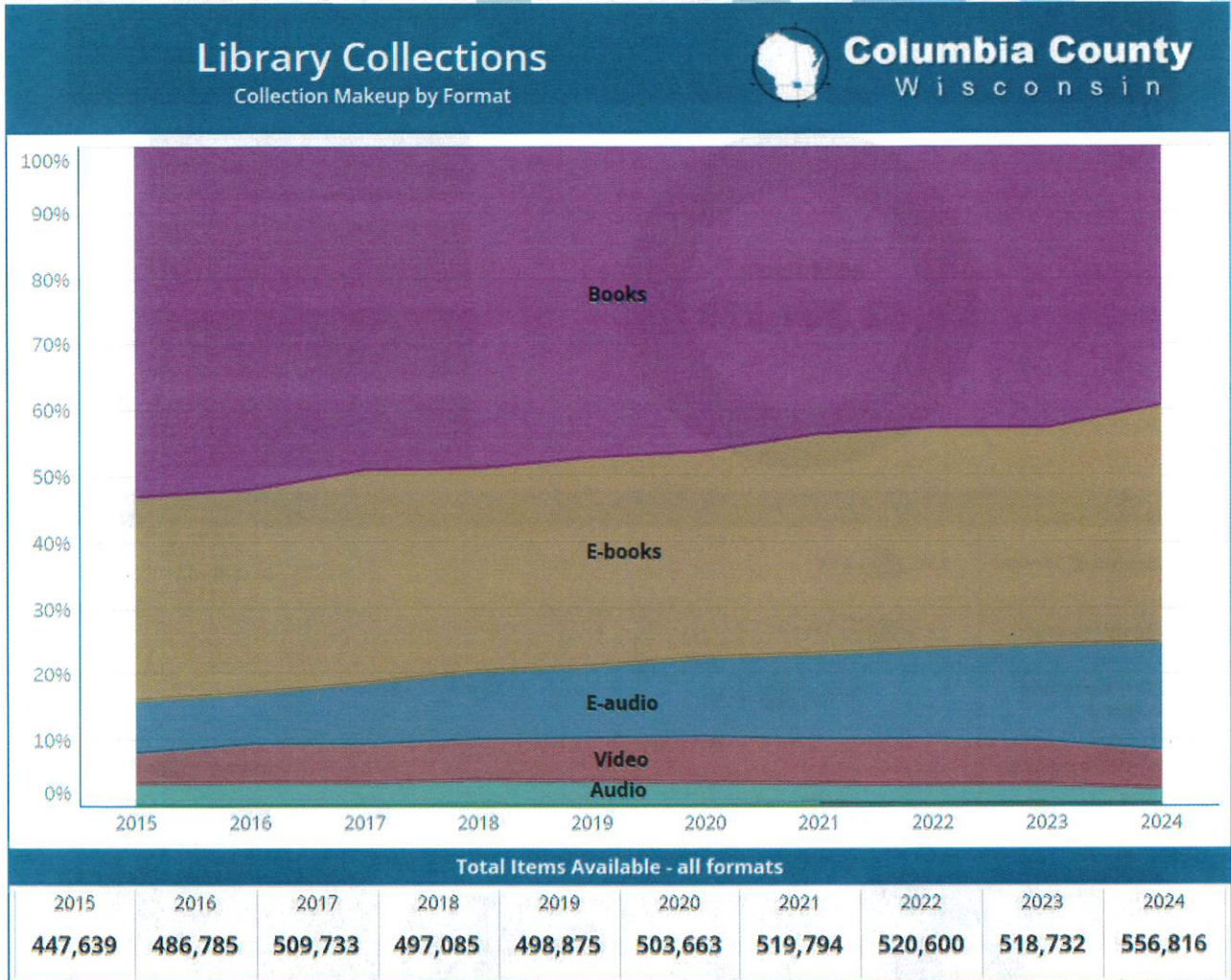
Overdrive is a statewide library resource funded by all libraries to provide downloadable eBooks, eAudio and eVideo and is accessible to all county residents with their library card.



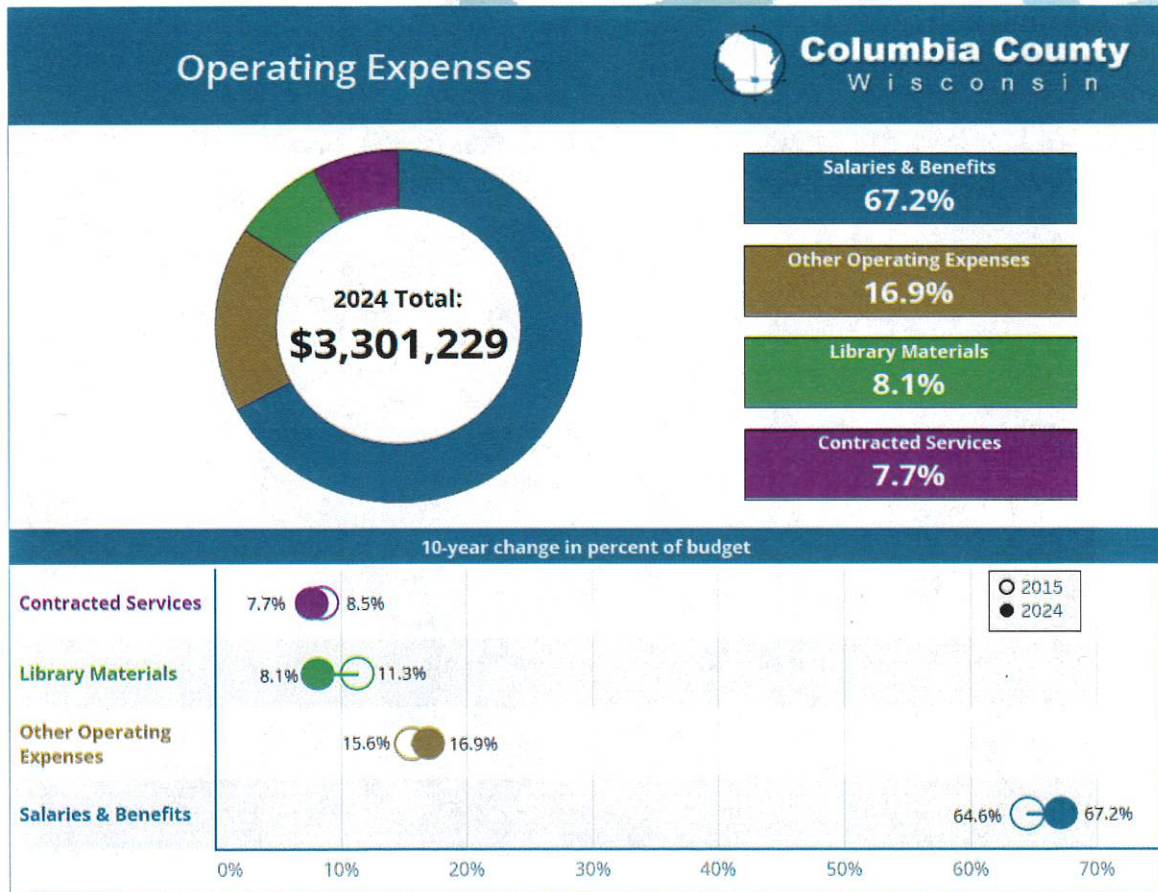
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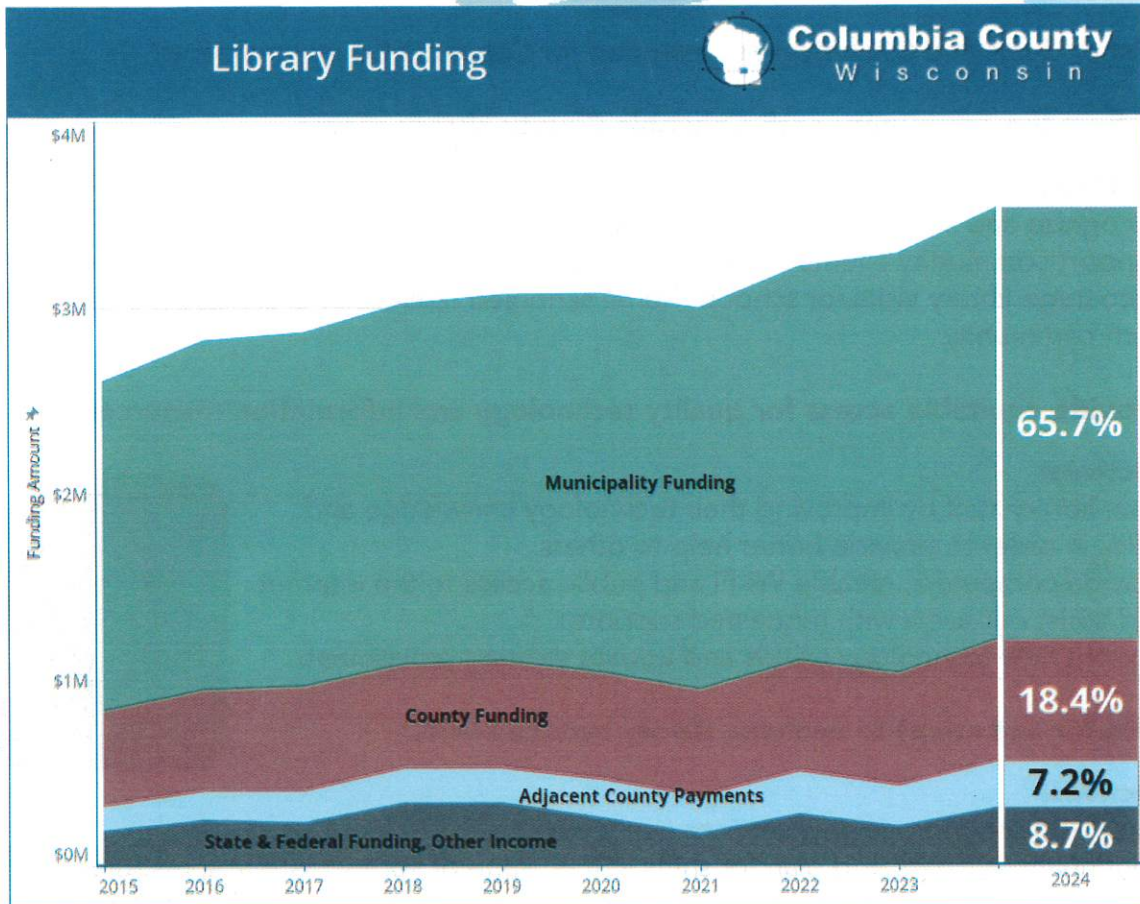
COLLECTIONS



OPERATING COSTS



FUNDING



The primary source of funding for libraries is from municipal budgets. Wisconsin counties play a crucial role in ensuring all residents have access to library services, even those residing in municipalities without a local public library. Based on a state formula, additional dollars are provided by Columbia County for serving county residents. This support helps compensate libraries for the services provided to county residents who are not part of a municipality that maintains its own library.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The entire list of Goals and Objectives are intended for Columbia County residents.

Goal #1: Reflect the community each Columbia County library serves.

Objectives:

1. Recognize and support the cultural uniqueness of each community.
2. Support community events by providing resources, publicity or co-sponsorship.
3. Encourage library visits for schools, home schooled families or organizations within each community.

Goal #2: Provide equitable access for quality technology and information resources.

Objectives:

1. Train library staff by improving their technology knowledge and skills, in order to provide better help to others.
2. Provide computers, reliable Wi-Fi and public access to the Internet and assist our users with requested support.
3. Explore new technology trends and update existing equipment.



Goal #3: Plan for and adapt to evolving library service needs.

Objectives:

1. Implement or improve new services every year.
2. Continually evaluate and plan for shifts in the usage of library materials, resources and services.
3. Seek and serve new and existing populations in need of evolving library services.

Goal #4: Continue to advocate for increased funding resources.

Objectives:

1. Create opportunities to educate others about county funding.
2. Focus on identifying specific funding needs.
3. Negotiate for county funding increases annually.



Goal #5: Build partnerships and develop cooperative programs that support local community needs.

Objectives:

1. Be active on South Central Library System committees to bring focus to the needs of each Columbia County library.
2. Seek partnerships with other county agencies to further library services to residents.
3. Encourage cooperation and communication among all Columbia County libraries, in order to benefit from shared resources and programming.

Staff In-Service
Friday, September 26, 2025

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|-----------------------|---|
| 8-9 a.m. | Breakfast and Conversation |
| 9-10:30 a.m. | Presentation and Discussion from Madison College |
| 10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | Departments Talk Discuss Projects/Goals/Duties/Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Services• Youth Services• Circulation Services |
| 12:15-12:45 p.m. | Lunch |
| 12:45-1 p.m. | Team Building #1 |
| 1-2 p.m. | Police Security Discussions |
| 2-4 p.m. | Team Building #2 |
| 4-4:30 p.m. | Future Plans and Discussions... What's Next! |