

2024



Annual Report To The Community

Learn, Enjoy, Connect with your Community



**Pierce County
Library System**
Information & Imagination



ANNUAL REPORT to the COMMUNITY 2024

In 2024, the Pierce County Library System continued to provide robust services tailored to the community's highest priority needs. Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) remained at the forefront of services and spaces, reflecting the Library's commitment to create a welcoming environment for all.

Additionally, the Library System embarked on the development of a comprehensive capital plan, laying the groundwork for a long-term strategy encompassing buildings, vehicles, and technology.

Residents celebrated the opening of an interim library in Lakewood while the planning and designing of a new, welcoming modern library in Sumner began.

The Library System engaged with the community, the Library Board, and staff to develop a new strategic plan, which will serve as a roadmap guiding the Library System from 2025 to 2029.

“

“My family recently was in a position of unexpectedly needing to buy a car on a tight budget. It was so helpful to have access to Consumer Reports to be able to do research and comparison before making a decision. Thanks so much to the library for making that resource available to the community.” - Pierce County Library cardholder



How the Pierce County Library became a lifeline for a veteran



Dan lived in nine states and four countries during his 23-year U.S. Army career. One duty station for six years was Joint Base Lewis-McChord, where he lived in DuPont and Lakewood, often visiting his local Pierce County Libraries.

Upon retirement from the military, Dan returned to Pierce County to buy a house with a plan to reintegrate into civilian life. That process involved a lot of paperwork—retirement, Veterans Affairs, job searching, and home buying—without access to a printer or scanner. A quick online search for “Pierce County Library near me” provided the solution.

“I knew I could go to a library,” he said. “I know a location is always open no matter what day of the week it is within reason.”

The Pierce County Library met his technology needs for out-processing, home buying, and job applications, as well as being a familiar place of comfort.

Having spent 29 months overseas during three deployments to the Middle East, Dan deals with post-traumatic stress disorder and experiences high levels of anxiety and alertness in public spaces.

“It’s quiet and I know I’m safe (at the library),” Dan said. “Few public buildings are as welcoming as the library.”

Learning

The Pierce County Library supports growth and curiosity, so children enter kindergarten ready to learn and people of all ages can navigate the real world and meet their goals.

- Worked with local artist Angela Larsen to introduce an evergreen theme for the Summer Reading Program. The theme and graphics are meant to be used for 3-5 years and reflect the wide range of diversity, inclusivity, and experiences of the local communities.
- Offered play groups in partnership with community facilitators who brought additional language skills, cultural competencies, and/or experience working with differently-abled children.



Enjoyment

The Pierce County Library helps people enjoy their free time, so they discover outlets to offset the pressures of daily life, relax, and live balanced lives.

- Experienced a milestone for digital media. For the first time ever, e-book and audiobook checkouts exceeded those of physical books, movies, and other materials.



Community

The Pierce County Library connects and strengthens communities, so people are engaged in thriving communities and are optimistic about their future.

- Focused strategy on culture heritage and enrichment celebrations through the Stories & Voices series, highlighting and amplifying stories and voices from communities, particularly those traditionally marginalized. Continues into 2025.



Overview of the Pierce County Library System

- Established in 1946.
- Includes unincorporated Pierce County and 15 annexed cities and towns.
- Serves approximately 680,000 people through 19 libraries and online services.
- Is a municipal corporation as cited in RCW 27.12.060 and holds a 501(c)(3) status as a public charity as described in IRS sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Core Services

The Library System continually strengthens its core services to operate effectively and carefully advance taxpayers’ investment. Some of its 2024 achievements include the following.



Materials

- Introduced Ukrainian library materials to the library catalog to expand on translated offerings.



Staff

- Launched Employee Resource Groups as a key part of staff equity, diversity, and inclusion strategy and commitment next steps. Continues into 2025.
- Invested in the development and training for all Pierce County Library leaders to strengthen leadership pipeline, capacity, and leadership competencies in 2024 and into 2025.



Spaces

- Continued design and progress for the new Sumner Pierce County Library to continue into 2025. Groundbreaking planned for 2025.
- Lakewood and Tillicum Libraries:
 - ◊ Opened the full-service Interim Lakewood Pierce County Library on Sept. 11, 2024.
 - ◊ Continued long-term Lakewood and Tillicum Libraries planning in 2024 and into 2025.

- Removed an underground storage tank and petroleum contaminated soil at the Buckley Pierce County Library, followed by updated landscaping.
- Conducted a thorough review of existing facilities, including building systems, infrastructure, renovations and additions, ADA accessibility, and maintenance history as part of a facilities condition assessment.
- Started development of a Comprehensive Capital Facility Plan, a long-range facility strategy for buildings, vehicles, and technology. Plan to complete in 2025.



Technology

- Obtained a cybersecurity grant to provide advanced threat protection to detect, mitigate, and automate responses to cyberthreats such as malware and ransomware, and support employee training.
- Conducted accessibility update of all public facing technology.



Partnerships

- Collaborated with GoodRoots Northwest to install a food locker outside the Bonney Lake Pierce County Library, helping to reduce food insecurity in the region.
- Made On the Road with Summer Reading stops with Nourish Pierce County and the Pierce County Housing Authority to provide access to library materials, giveaway books, Summer Reading materials, snacks, and craft activities directly to communities.
- Contracted with Peer Washington to provide trauma-informed peer-to-peer support at the Parkland/Spanaway Pierce County Library.
- Continued volunteering to serve as Voter Point of Assistance for Pierce County Elections at library locations. Assisted more than 1,000 voters for the General Election on Nov. 5—a record turnout!



Classes and Events

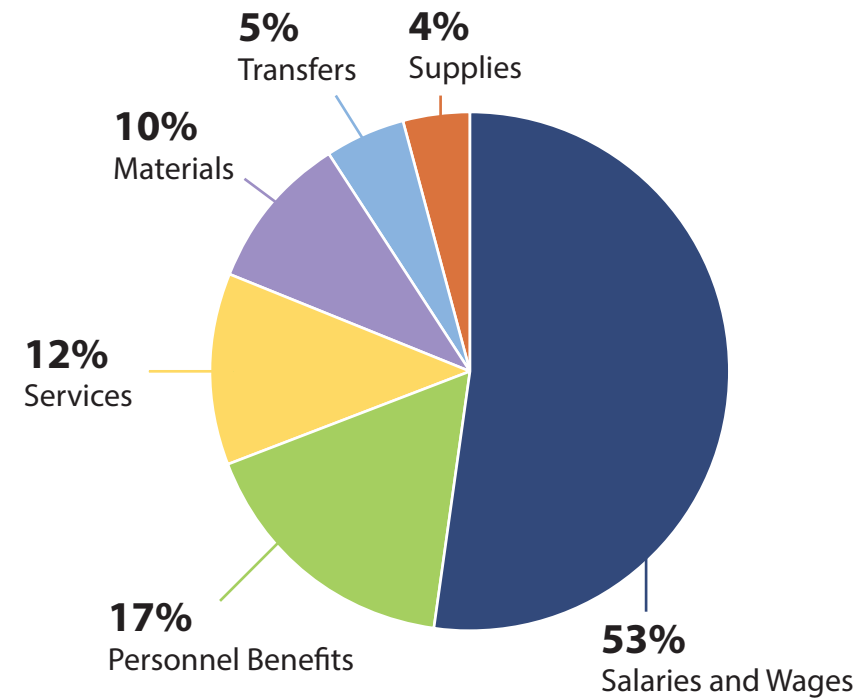
- Organized a series of Career Exploration workshops in collaboration with Goodwill Olympic & Rainier Region, designed to help attendees identify their strengths, explore career paths, and prepare for interviews. Strategically scheduled workshops before job fairs to maximize impact.



Business Processes

- Reviewed and updated Board policies with an EDI lens as part of a comprehensive policy review project. Will conclude in 2025.

General Fund Expenses of 2024



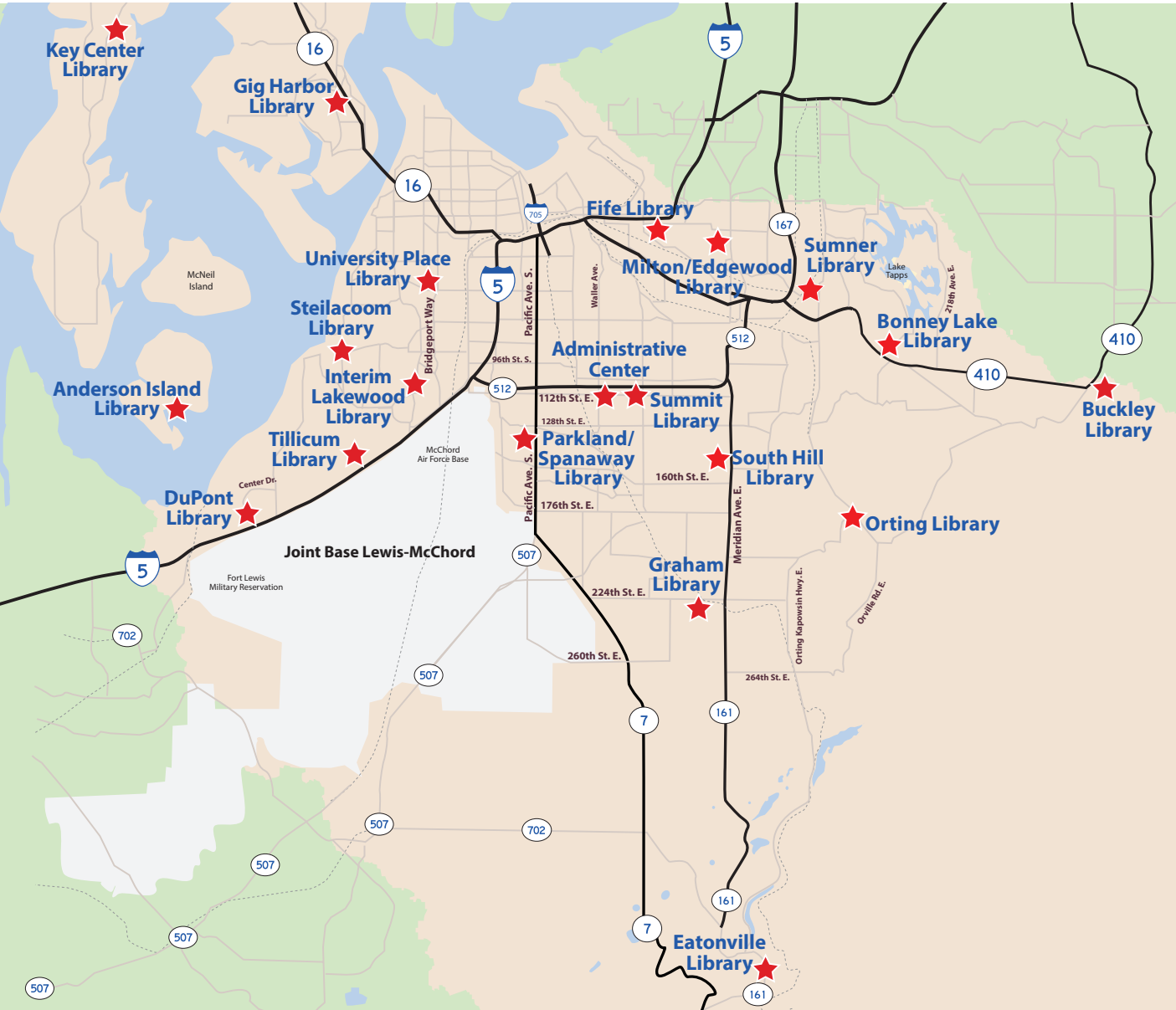
Your investment in the Pierce County Library

- Total 2024 revenues: \$46,908,470.99
- Total 2024 expenditures: \$43,362,407.93
- 97.35% of the funds for library services comes from property taxes. By state law, library systems may collect up to 50 cents per \$1,000 of a property's assessed value.
- 33.82 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value was the 2024 tax rate.



“

“There’s something special about watching my little ones fall in love with books. Even at this age, every page is an adventure waiting to be discovered. I’m grateful to have a local library where we can drop in and explore their interests and find their next favorite book!”
-Vanessa, Pierce County Library cardholder



About your Pierce County Library System

- Unincorporated Pierce County and 15 annexed cities and towns:
- Bonney Lake
- Buckley
- DuPont
- Eatonville
- Edgewood
- Fife
- Gig Harbor
- Lakewood
- Milton
- Orting
- South Prairie
- Steilacoom
- Sumner
- University Place
- Wilkeson



System Statistics

Organizational Overview	
Employees:	303
Population of service area:	680,000
Size:	1,800 square miles
Books and Materials	
Books and other in-library titles:	616,646
Online/downloadable titles:	931,506
Total books and materials:	1,548,152
Visits	
To 19 libraries:	1,428,085
To website:	1,640,468
Total visits:	3,068,553
Checkouts	
Cardholders:	336,412
Checkouts from bookshelves:	2,569,689
Checkouts online:	2,857,741
Checkouts per day:	14,870
Total Checkouts:	5,427,430
Usage of Services	
Uses of online databases/e-sources:	399,121
Public computer sessions:	202,934
Wi-Fi sessions:	863,906
Event and class attendance:	85,325
Adult care facilities, child care centers, and homebound people served:	51,574



Books and More

- Print, e-books, audiobooks
- Magazines, music, movies
- Book clubs
- Museum passes



Online

- Catalog of books and materials
- Downloadable e-books, audiobooks, magazines, comics, videos
- E-sources such as buying guides, auto repair, coding, genealogy, investing
- Real-time homework tutors and job coaches



Job + Business Services

- Expert help
- Business workshops
- E-sources and online tools



Public Meeting Rooms

- Online reservations
- AV equipment

Technology

- Computers, laptops, Wi-Fi
- Printers, copiers, fax machines, e-sources and online tools
- Technology classes and certifications



Kids and Family

- School readiness
- Story times and block play
- Baby Books to Go
- STEAM
- Homework help



2024 Contributions

Friends of the Library

Friends of the Library groups are member-supported, nonprofit organizations that support library services in their local communities. These community members advocate for their library and raise support and awareness through book sales and other activities. In 2024, the 17 Friends of the Library groups contributed \$36,410.55 in support of library services.



Pierce County Library Foundation

Thank you to the Pierce County Library Foundation for strengthening library programs and services for the benefit of the Pierce County Library System community!

The Pierce County Library Foundation focused on several funding priorities in 2024 in support of the Pierce County Library System by providing:

- \$102,600 to support 24/7 access to the Library's e-book/audiobook collection.
- \$149,464 for children's literacy programming, collections, and book giveaways.
- \$20,000 grant from The Gary Milgard Family in support of the Peer Washington program at the Parkland/Spanaway Pierce County Library.
- \$62,000 (a record!) raised at the 6th Annual Trivia BEE to support the Library's On the Road program, which reduces barriers to access by delivering materials directly to communities, visiting schools, community center, food banks, and senior centers.



2024 Foundation Donors

The Pierce County Library Foundation thanks the following individual and corporate donors for their generous support of \$655,547 through December 31, 2024. For information on how you can make a gift in support of your Pierce County Library System, please contact the Foundation office at 253-548-3541 or foundation@piercecountylibrary.org







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 - Sazerac Company
 - Soundview Uniserv Council
 - Tacoma Rubber Stamp & Sign
 - Trader Joe’s
 - WSECU

Memoir Society

The Memoir Society is a growing group of individuals who have made an enduring gift to the Foundation through their estate plans.

Sharifa Ali
Lauren Angelo
Katie C. Baker
Paul Bala
Judy Ball
Mary Brasseaux
William “Bill” Bruno
Wanda Burkett
Donald L. Callentine*
Vida L. Callentine*
Dean Carrell
Keith Chambers*
Michael Chapman
Kenneth DeRoche*
Phyllis T. Ellis*
Theoria Engstrom*
Phyllis K. Erickson*
Rhonda Framke
Christina Greene
Mary Hammond

Kelsey Housman
Jeness Joque
Paul Kaltinick
Brandon Koch
Tracy Koch
Clara Ladd
Georgia Lomax
Kristy Lonne
Elizabeth Lufkin
J.J. McCament
Ethel M. McIntyre*
Tamara Mills*
Don Monroe
Janet Monroe
Benita “Bunny” Nance
Hazel Nance*
Jim Nance*
Don Pearson
Nancy Pearson
Susan Piper

Nancy Purdy
Penny Rooks
Nancy Rose
Scott Rose
Elizabeth M. Rossi
Benjamin Scougale
Julie Scougale
John Steiner*
Karen Triplett
Celia Warren
Robert Warren
Faye Whitworth
Gladys Van Buskirk*
Robert Van Buskirk*

*= Deceased

Tribute Gifts In Honor/ Memory of

Kristen Angelo
In memory of Gale Lee

Jonna Lynn Bransford
In memory of Betty and Check Christiansen

Keith Fincham
In memory of Paul Hartment

Debra Godfrey
In honor a friend's parents

Rodney Hohn
In memory of Clinton and Maryann Hohn

Kari Kassis
In memory of Barbara Pick

Cheryl Peach
In memory of Jean Avalee Buckland

Chris Peake
In honor of the Sumner Library and Sumner USPS

Julie Pickering
In honor of the Song Gallichotte Family

Diane Scheidt
In memory of Don Grieve

Elizabeth Schirmer
Made in memorial to Marilyn Georgina Lomax

Glenda Stilwell
In memory of Carol Drashil

Pamela Suzuki
In memory of Leon and Lorraine Daniels

Endowments

Endowed funds take a long view of the future, and can transform a community from one of dependency to one of ascendancy. Individuals who contribute to these funds are making a valuable commitment to the Pierce County Library and their community for generations to come. Please contact the Pierce County Library Foundation for more information.

- Pierce County Library Foundation Endowment Fund
- Ellis Endowment for Key Center Library Fund
- Margaret K. Ellis Endowment Fund
- Carolyn Else Endowment for Library Collections Fund
- Ethel M. McIntyre Outreach Fund
- Danae Rideout Steilacoom Library Endowment Fund
- Anonymous Donor Endowment Fund
- Maureen T. Bala Endowment

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