Over the past year, the Roeliff Jansen Community Library has thought a lot about what it means to be sustainable. How can we best support the sustainability of our library, our community, and our planet? What do practices that are environmentally sound, socially equitable, and financially feasible mean in our daily work?

Libraries are inherently sustainable. We are a sharing economy, supporting the sharing of resources and providing a place where people can borrow rather than buy. In doing so we help reduce consumption and save people money. We are also places that promote social equity, empowering individuals and leveling the playing field so that all can participate in our democracy. As for financial feasibility, there are few institutions that can squeeze more out of a dollar than a public library.

So what have we done this past year to further these goals? We became a member of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative, which has helped us examine our practices. We conducted waste and energy audits, updated financial, programming, collection development, and personnel policies, and inventoried supplies. We cut back on our use of plastic, including of those receipt papers you get with checked out items. More visibly, we organized southeast Columbia County’s first Repair Café, where about 100 items were repaired in order to continue their useful life. We held Back to Nature series on topics such as birding and native plants and held a Homegrown National Park program. We continued our seed library. We installed interpretive panels about the wildlife in our region along our path to the Roe Jan Kill. We screened Tell Me Another Story, a film about the importance of diversity in children’s literature. We held English language and digital literacy classes to build skills to participate more fully in our society.

Finally, we also conducted a community survey to learn how we can more effectively and efficiently serve you. Your feedback will inform our planning for the coming years as we develop a new long-range plan to sustain your library and our community for years to come.

Tammy Gaskell
Library Director
**2023 By the Numbers**

**Our collection: What you can borrow and use**

- **Print material**: 19,741
- **Electronic materials—e-books, downloadable audio and video, e-magazines, databases**: 29,114
- **Non-electronic materials—DVDs, books on CD, museum passes, etc.**: 4,900

**Total holdings**: 53,755

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**2023 Circulation**

- **Adult print books**: 14,039
- **Children’s print books**: 5,050
- **Children’s other materials**: 527
- **Adult other materials**: 6,471
- **Children’s other materials**: 296

**Total collection use**: 49,432

**Registered borrowers**: 4,135 / **New patrons**: 318 / **Total number of visitors**: 30,834

**RJCL local public funds in comparison to other libraries (3-year average)**

- **RJCL**: $19.41/capita
- **Columbia County libraries**: $35.13/capita
- **Mid-Hudson Library System libraries**: $56.77/capita

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**2023 by the numbers**

We celebrated Cinco de Mayo by playing some Spanish bingo

**A seasonal centerpiece workshop was a hit**

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**A seasonal centerpiece workshop was a hit**

Wednesday afternoons are busy with homeschool fun and learning

**Our first Repair Café was a real community event**

Tia took summer reading to the Copake-Hillsdale Farmers Market

**We celebrated Cinco de Mayo by playing some Spanish bingo**

**A seasonal centerpiece workshop was a hit**

**Wednesday afternoons are busy with homeschool fun and learning**

**Our first Repair Café was a real community event**

**Program attendance**

- **Adult program attendance**: 3,168
- **Children’s and teen program attendance**: 2,173

**Visits to website**: 24,310 / **Computer sessions**: 928 / **Wireless access**: 7,033

**How was your library funded?**

- **Income—$437,499**
  - **Grants**: $52,787 (12%)
  - **Taxes from Ancram, Copake & Hillsdale, donation from Taughannock**: $149,591 (34%)
  - **Miscellaneous income**: $19,265 (4%)

- **Expenses—$422,636**
  - **Personnel (salaries, benefits, other related expenses)**: $235,244 (56%)
  - **Library materials, supplies, fees**: $35,888 (8%)
  - **Library paid $242,935 to retire mortgage with funds from a bequest of $270,879**

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**What did the money pay for?**

- **Building operation and maintenance**: $59,322 (14%)
- **Program expenses**: $28,240 (6%)
- **Grants**: $52,787 (12%)
- **Miscellaneous**: $22,773 (5%)
- **Friends’ contributions**: $11,265 (3%)
- **Library materials, supplies, fees**: $35,888 (8%)
- **Fundraising and communications**: $36,624 (9%)
- **Equipment and technology**: $6,495 (2%)
- **State and county funds**: $4,765 (1%)
- **Funds received from fundraisers**: $193,701 (46%)
- **Miscellaneous income**: $19,265 (4%)
- **Business partnerships**: $8,125 (2%)
- **Friends’ contributions**: $11,265 (3%)
- **Fundraising and communications**: $36,624 (9%)
- **Equipment and technology**: $6,495 (2%)
- **State and county funds**: $4,765 (1%)
- **Funds received from fundraisers**: $193,701 (46%)
- **Miscellaneous income**: $19,265 (4%)
- **Business partnerships**: $8,125 (2%)

**A conservative estimate of the amount patrons saved by borrowing library materials and attending free programs**: $745,000. And that doesn’t include the many other benefits of having a library in your community!

*Not including hotspots, camping equipment, seeds, and many other resources.*