



STRATFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

2025
ANNUAL
REPORT

Our Mission

We are an equitable, safe and welcoming community where everyone can explore, learn, create and be inspired.

Our Vision

We are a place where hope and wonder fly.

We envision a Library which connects people, inspires learning, literacy and curiosity; and sparks change for a better community.

2023 - 2026 Library Board

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Dear Friends

SPL continues to evolve and innovate to meet the needs of our vibrant and growing community. Our shared vision to be “a place where hope and wonder fly” inspires us to provide outstanding services and programs that connect, inspire, and spark change. Whether you are visiting the library in person, taking advantage of our extensive digital collection, attending a free program, or seeking support from our expert staff, Stratford Public Library is here for you.

Stratford continues to grow, and that growth brings increased expectations for library services and spaces. In 2025, significant effort was dedicated to ongoing advocacy for a new Stratford Public Library at the Grand Trunk Renewal (GTR) site, in partnership with the YMCA of Three Rivers and the City of Stratford. The vision of a shared, centrally located community facility remains a compelling opportunity to meet the long-term needs of our community. While no final decisions have been made (as of today!), SPL remains committed to advocating for a library that is the right size, in the right place, and designed to serve Stratford well into the future.

2025 also included important foundational work focused on equity and inclusion. The library completed a diversity audit of the collection, helping us better understand where improvements are needed to ensure our materials reflect the community we serve. This work will guide meaningful updates in 2026, including the development of a new world languages collection for children - supporting literacy, belonging, and access for families across Stratford.

As always, we look ahead with ambition. The Stratford Public Library thrives because of the community it serves, and your voices continue to shape our direction. We invite you to share your ideas, feedback, and hopes for the future - what you'd like to see more of, less of, or something entirely new. Together, we will continue building a library that reflects Stratford and supports lifelong learning, connection, and opportunity for all.



Krista Robinson
CEO / Library Director



Michael Corbett
Board Chair

"I got my card the day after I moved here. Libraries are precious."

By the Numbers

With membership growing by 4%, love for library events, services and collections is as strong as ever in Stratford. Thank you for using the library!

409,893

materials borrowed



35

items borrowed
per active
member



151,317

in person
visits

Up 5%



11,683

active card
holders

Up 4%

filled

73,096

requests



1,521

new library cards
issued

29,156

reference questions
were answered



Up 14%



11,431

public computer
sessions



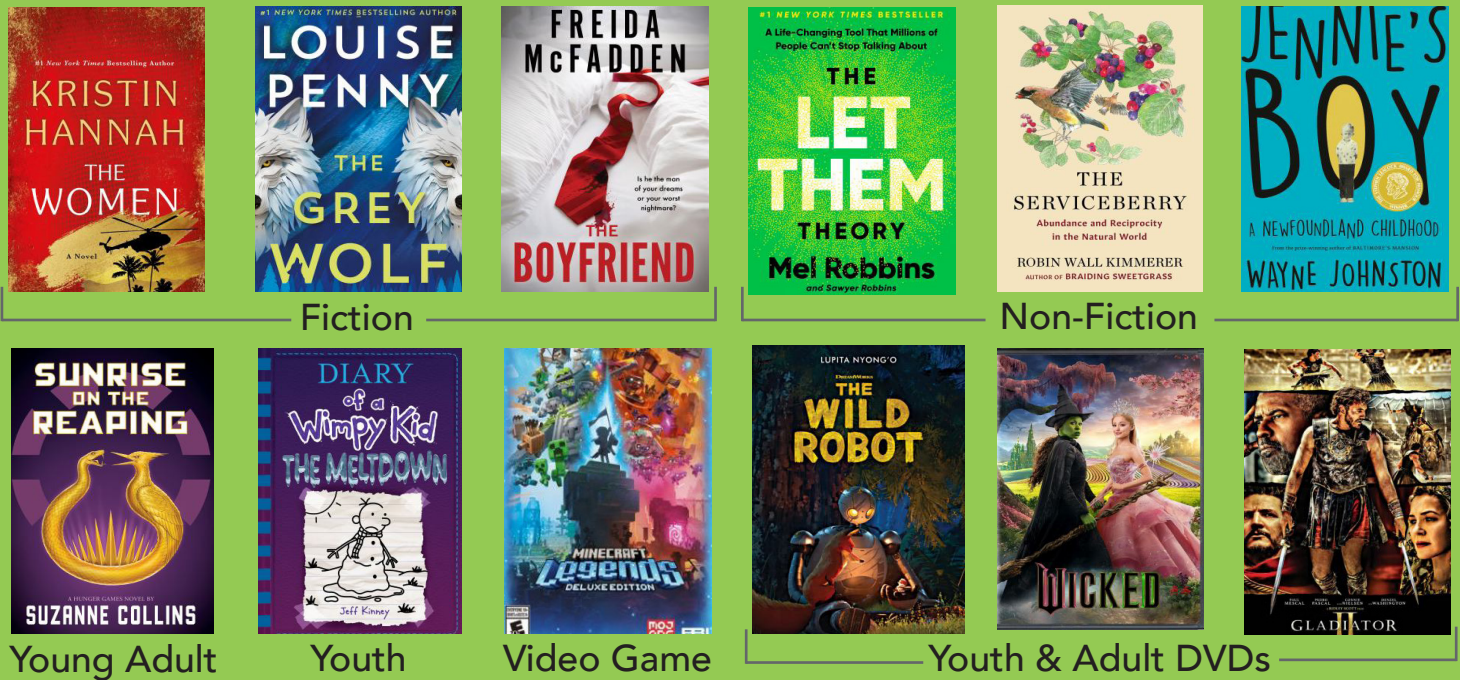
13,772

wifi connections

"Librarians are AWESOME! Thank you for everything you do!! You have started sooo many young ones on their journey with books."

Most Popular

Ever wonder what your neighbours are reading and watching? These were the most popular bestsellers and blockbusters at the library last year.



Using the library saves households money.

2025 Average library taxes per home*	\$179
Average benefit per resident ⁺	\$523
Average benefit per household: Family of 4 ⁺	\$1,120

* based on average assessment of \$350,000

⁺ calculated using the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit created by the Ontario Library Service and the NORDIK Institute

"I truly don't know how I'd live without the Stratford Library. Each and every staff member is kind and helpful. Special shoutout to Trish and her incredible children's programming!"

Programs and Outreach

The library is much more than just books, and we were thrilled to connect with the community at events both in and outside of our library last year!



28,895 people attended **916** programs

3,622

residents met
with us at **22**
community events

3,587

people attended
325 MakerSpace
programs & labs

5,713

kids learned about
the library during
129 class visits

Volunteers made

346

deliveries to people
who are unable to visit
the library

220

people were helped
by volunteer
Tech Tutors

72

newcomers were
helped at SPL by the
YMCA Settlement
Services program

"Stratford Public Library is well known for punching well above its weight. From its good selection of books to its varied programming for all ages. It's a great resource for the city."

TD Summer Reading Club

A summer of fun was had by all in 2025!

1,212 kids joined SPL's TD Summer Reading program and **7,978** people participated in our **121** free summer programs.



"SPL programming for kids is simply the best in the city. Great variety, welcoming, and accessible."

Poet Laureates



In January 2025, SPL and Destination Stratford launched Stratford's first Poet Laureate program. This three-year pilot project aims to celebrate and elevate the literary arts through written and spoken word in our community.

The inaugural Poet Laureates were David Stones (3-year term) and Quinn Mayer (youth, 1-year term).

David and Quinn ran countless poetry programs throughout the City, sharing Stratford and area stories with unique perspectives that reflect our past, represent our present, and help shape our future.

Be sure to check out the "Roots Through Stone Poetry Anthology," a compilation of works submitted to the Every Voice Poetry Contest.

"We so love and appreciate our library!!! Love to you folks who work tirelessly to give my family such a wonderful educational and experiential addition to our life here in Stratford."

2025 Highlights

We are always looking for new and exciting ways to meet our community's needs. Here are some of the many ways we supported you in 2025.



Lote4Kids

This new collection of children's picture books in various World Languages gives access to over 8,000+ books in 100+ languages.



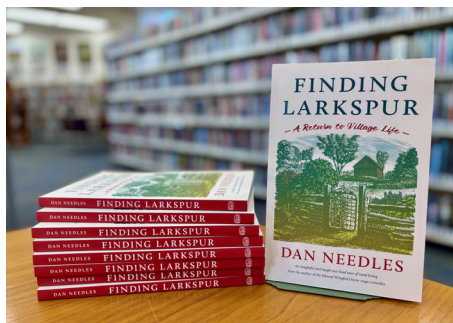
New Kits

Youth had a new and fun way to enjoy literature and learning with the addition of Yoto players and launch pads to the collection.



Chess Knight

People of all ages come together on Monday nights to enjoy a game of chess. This program builds community - one move at a time.



Perth County Reads

SPL joined other Perth County libraries in offering Perth County Reads. Residents across Perth County read and attended programs related to Finding Larkspur by Dan Needles.



Happy Hours

The library experimented in using its space in new and creative ways. One way was in offering Happy Hours which featured local artists and social time after SPL closed.



Poppy Project

We hosted workshops to help community members crochet poppies for the Stratford Poppy Project initiative. Poppies were used in an art installation on William Hutt Bridge.

"The library is a great space to be able to complete homework, etc. At home it can sometimes be hard to focus and that makes me late to turn in assignments, and projects for school."

Thank you, Donors!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our generous donors. Donations directly support programs, collections, and services that enrich lives every day. Whether it's expanding digital resources, offering free community programming, or maintaining a safe and welcoming space, your generosity makes a measurable difference. Together, we are building a stronger, more connected Stratford for today and tomorrow.



A special thank you to:

- Kinsmen Club of Stratford
- Perth Community Futures Development Corporation
- Rotaract Club of Stratford
- St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
- Teahen Family Nutrition & Wellbeing Fund
- Terrence Poole Endowment
- And the dozens of individuals who also financially supported SPL in 2025

"The library is awesome! It's safe, no judgement, and I could be entertained all night. I'd have a sleepover here if I could pick a random place to have a sleepover."



**Libraries are important
community hubs.
Please support yours!**
splibrary.ca/donate

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