Year-End Review

The Shenandoah County Library System is comprised of the County Library in Edinburg and five small community libraries at Strasburg, Mt. Jackson, Ft. Valley, Basye and New Market. All locations provide access to books and periodicals, computers, the Internet, meeting facilities and special programs. The Board of Trustees believes it is important for citizens to know about services offered by the library system and hopes this document aids in that purpose.

One unique function the County Library in Edinburg serves, is to house and staff the Shenandoah Room and Truban Archives, which is dedicated to preservation of the history of Shenandoah County from inception to present day. The richness of the collection, which includes published works, photographs, and manuscripts, attracts researchers from across Virginia and the nation. There is an obvious need for more collection space, and even more space to accommodate the numerous researchers who visit the County Library to use it.

As a result of this and other issues with the present County Library building (some are explained in later sections), a major renovation and expansion of the County Library building in Edinburg is deemed necessary to better serve the needs of the county.

We believe the information included here is important for you to know about your Library System. Some is general in nature, such as the Mission Statement and Five-Year Plan. Other information is more detailed, explaining the current status of some specific aspects of the System. If you have questions not answered here, please see the back page on how to reach us.

What Aren't We Doing That We Could Do? What Could We Do Better?

- Reach more people with programs.
- Provide multiple and better indoor public spaces.
- Improve the Truban Archives space and services.
- Provide outdoor public gathering space.
- Accommodate a technology lab & maker space.
- Encourage entrepreneurs by providing resources they need.
- Host entertainment events for the community.
- Help small business owners learn how to succeed.
- Attract new businesses to the county, thereby adding jobs.
- Help the county retain its young people.
- And much, much more!

What Is a Community Public Library to you?

It depends!! Are you a(n)….

- Expectant mother?
- Toddler?
- Child, age 5-11?
- Teenager?
- Parent of a teenager?
- Adult?
- Senior citizen?
- College student?
- Teacher?
- Entrepreneur?

- Small business owner?
- Web site designer?
- Blogger?
- Farmer?
- Concerned citizen?
- Public servant?
- Book club member?
- Crafter?
- Genealogist?

- Historian?
- Inventor?
- Citizen scientist?
- Gardener?
- Citizen needing free Internet service?
- Newcomer to the community?
- Job seeker?
- Volunteer?

Today's most effective community libraries have evolved to embrace modern technologies and new ideas about the role of libraries in their communities. More than ever, they are a vital component in determining the success of a community's citizens. They provide central access points for a range of cultural and recreational programs and services, along with health and social services, to nurture vibrant community life. Research shows that the annual return on investment in a library is no less than $5 for every $1 invested and in many cases more.

The community library is uniquely positioned to respond to the needs of the community – by providing: information on a myriad of subjects, Internet access, public gathering spaces, technology, social program aids, special-interest programs, and recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages. Facilities must be accessible, safe, and inviting, and be the hotspot for obtaining access to news and information. A healthy community library makes life richer and better for everyone living in the service area. Having access to a library is no longer just about having a library card that gives access to a book collection. It's about having access to a community hub where you can acquire knowledge, make social connections, exchange ideas, and get the help you need to be successful in any endeavor you choose.

Even more, the community library is the primary bridge across the digital divide. It evens the playing field for those less fortunate, for those who are new to the community, and for those who need help.

No one looks down on you if you enter a library. It is a neutral place where anything is possible for those who are searching for something better, or a better way!

Library System Mission Statement

To enrich the quality of life in the community by providing residents with access to the world of ideas, information, and creative experience.

Vision

The Shenandoah County Library System is an organization that fosters lifelong habits of learning, self-improvement, and self-expression. All library locations provide space and resources to support the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community.

Five Year Plan

Most longstanding organizations have prescribed goals, and the Shenandoah County Library System is no exception. The Five-Year Plan, reviewed each year, guides the Board of Trustees, Director, staff and volunteers to achieve the stated mission and vision for the Library System. The Plan lists specific goals to achieve, including short-comings to remedy, and notes those most recently completed from prior Plans. Here is a summary of the current Plan:

- *Facilities:* User feedback indicates need for significant additional space in the County Library building for more group meeting spaces, expanded children's services, more access to technology, and welcoming public spaces. In addition, spaces currently allocated to the Shenandoah Room and Truban Archives are inadequate.
- *Community Libraries:* Community libraries, powered primarily by volunteers, provide unique and valuable assets to the Library System. However, growth has increased pressure on the volunteer workforce. There is increasing need for more volunteers and paid professional staff support to provide a consistent service level.
- *Outreach and Publicity:* Users are generally satisfied with services and collections, but many are unaware of the range of services provided by the Library System. There is a need to increase awareness of Library resources by focusing on outreach and publicity.
- *Technology:* Technology drives the Library System's ability to provide services, access to information, and collaborative spaces. The Library System should be active in providing access to digital formats and hands-on experience with new technologies. We must provide tools for citizens to develop their skills, to be capable and literate in a rapidly-changing technological landscape.
- *Collections and Services:* User feedback indicates the Library System should continue to develop print collections while meeting the growing demand for online collections. Anticipated future use of the Library System is expected to grow primarily in the educational and historical research areas.
- *Organization, Policy, and Leadership:* The Library System needs to revise and refine documentation and procedures. Leadership, training, and succession planning at all levels are crucial to the long-term health of the organization.

2020 -2022 Covid-19 Pandemic Impact & Response
Responding to a Changing Environment
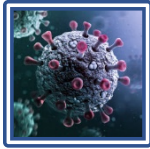
As 2019 neared its end, rumblings of a possible pandemic were heard around the world. When the COVID-19 virus arrived locally, the Shenandoah Library System, like other public places, shut down to bare minimum services. The Library System constantly adjusted its operations to information provided by health officials on local community conditions. Eventually, adding plexiglass shields to circulation desks allowed masked visitors to begin entering buildings in controlled numbers and staff were masked whenever visitors were present. Although physical borrowings were sharply down for the 2020-2021 period, patrons explored other possibilities. Digital format borrows increased dramatically. By the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022, restrictions eased, though the pandemic will have a lasting effect on both the physical and procedural aspects of service.

Back to the Future - 2023 and Beyond!
Meeting Needs

Planning for a building renovation and expansion for the County Library is now underway! In 2007 the current Library building was determined to be inadequate for the services it provides. Subsequent surveys in more recent years confirmed that finding. Rapid technology changes, increased demand for community meeting spaces and the addition of new types of services libraries are now commonly expected to provide, make expansion more imperative.

At a Special Meeting in March 2022 the Library System Board of Trustees voted to award the initial design phase to VMDO Architects (VMDO), of Charlottesville, VA. VMDO is experienced with public projects, including libraries. This initial phase will cost more than $550,000, paid entirely with private funding at no cost to the public. In May, VMDO canvassed the community for ideas and expectations. The proposed new design will double the building footprint and provide outdoor community space as well. The design will be released publicly in 2023.

Annual Accomplishments – Fiscal Years 2018-2022
Numbers, Please!

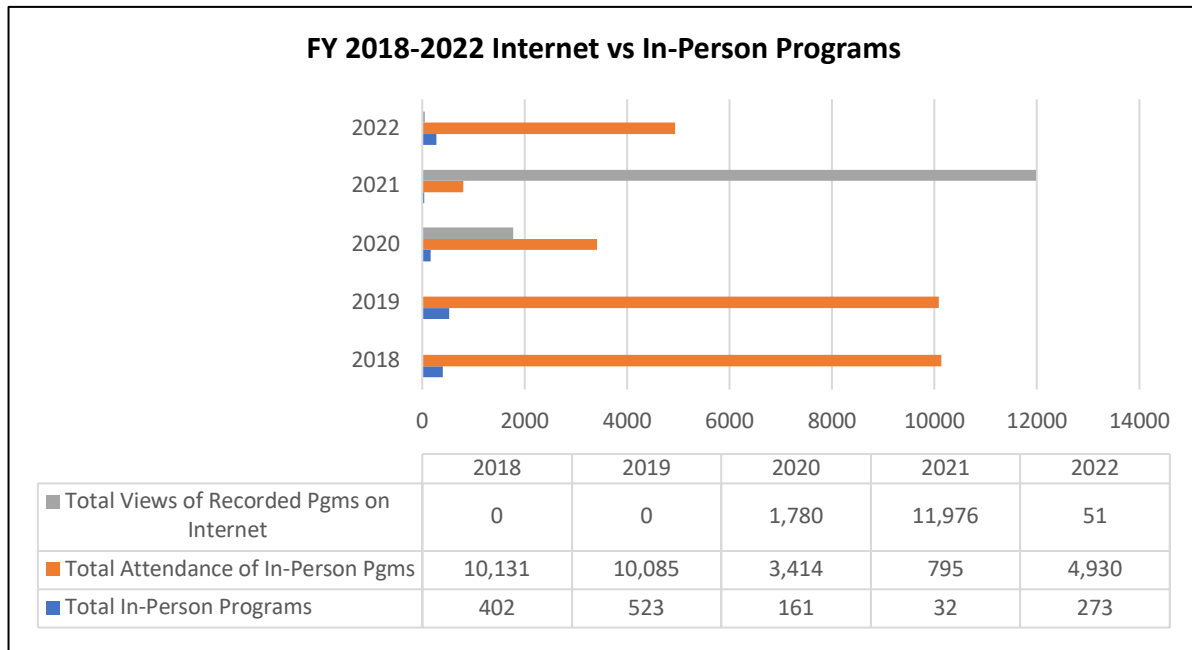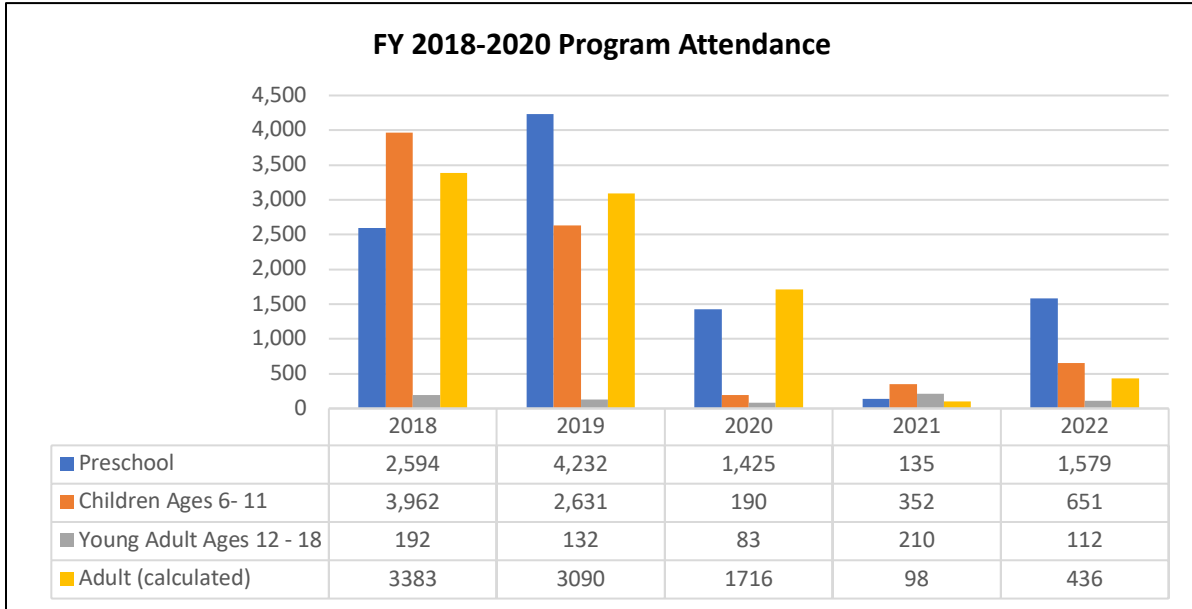The following pages provide statistics for some of the measures of Library System performance. Fiscal years run July 1-June 30. Fiscal year 2022 ended in June 2022. Due to the impact of the pandemic, we provide a few years' historical data to illustrate more normal years. 2020-2021 data show the impact of the pandemic. 2022 is the immediate past year and shows the beginning of a recovery back to normal.

Annual Accomplishments – continued

PROGRAMS

One of the major limitations of the current building in Edinburg is lack of space for in-person programs. Often, programs and program attendance, as well as meetings for external organizations, are limited because there is only one public meeting room available. As you would expect, in-person attendance dropped significantly during the pandemic. The Library responded by offering Internet-based programs instead (2020 – 2021).

FY 2018-2020 Program Attendance

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Preschool	2,594	4,232	1,425	135	1,579
Children Ages 6- 11	3,962	2,631	190	352	651
Young Adult Ages 12 - 18	192	132	83	210	112
Adult (calculated)	3383	3090	1716	98	436

FY 2018-2022 Internet vs In-Person Programs

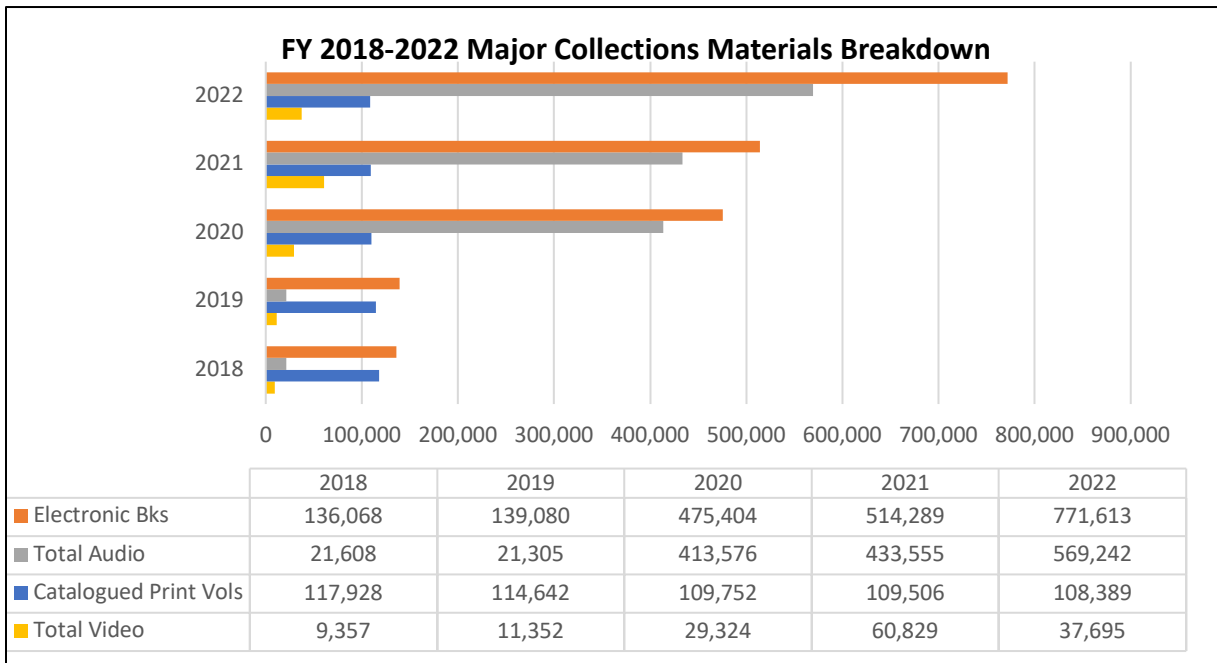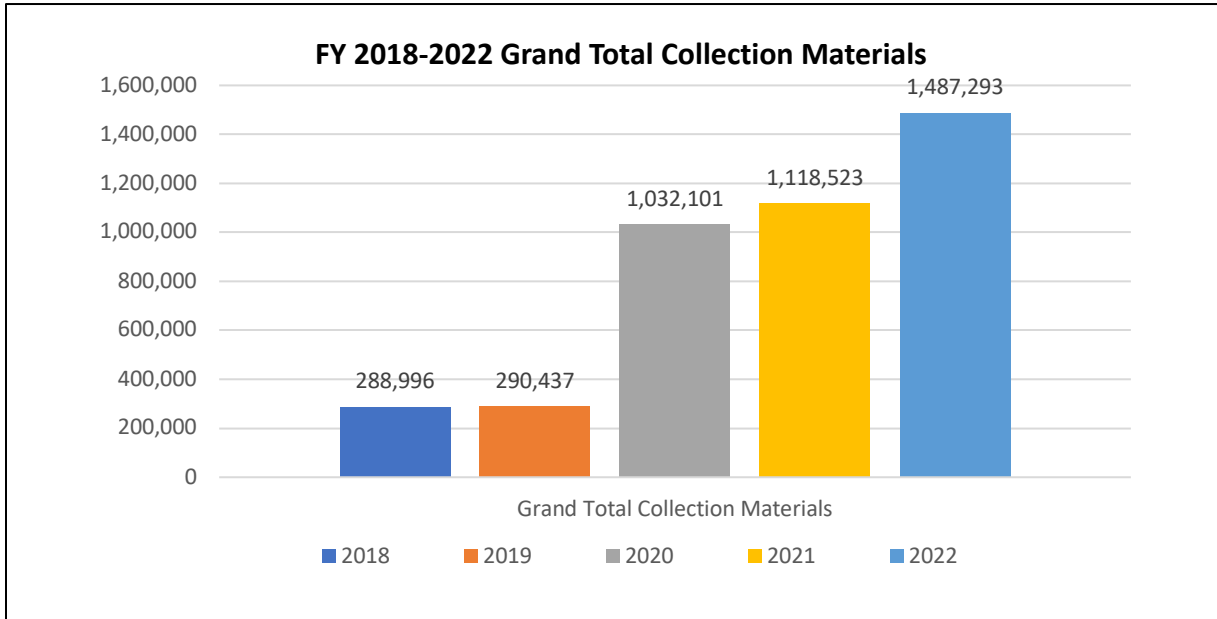|	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Views of Recorded Pgms on Internet	0	0	1,780	11,976	51
Total Attendance of In-Person Pgms	10,131	10,085	3,414	795	4,930
Total In-Person Programs	402	523	161	32	273

Note: Before 2020, no online option was offered for programs. For 2020 - 2021, online viewing was offered for some programs which were mostly for children. In 2022, only some history and research programs could be viewed online.

Annual Accomplishments – continued
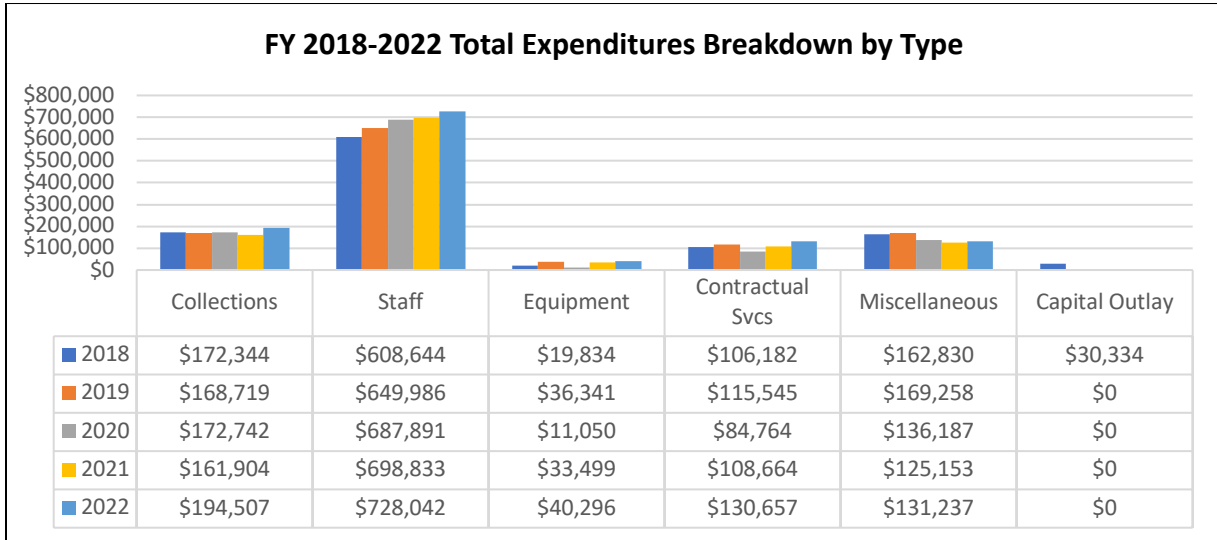
COLLECTIONS

Technology trends and the pandemic have combined to dramatically increase the use of digital formats. The Library responded to this demand by significantly increasing its digital holdings. The slight reduction of physical catalogued print volumes shown in the second chart is due to the routine culling of volumes that have not circulated. It is normal for this number to fluctuate from year-to-year. Note the dramatic increase of audio books and e-books.

FY 2018-2022 Grand Total Collection Materials

Year	Grand Total Collection Materials
2018	288,996
2019	290,437
2020	1,032,101
2021	1,118,523
2022	1,487,293

FY 2018-2022 Major Collections Materials Breakdown

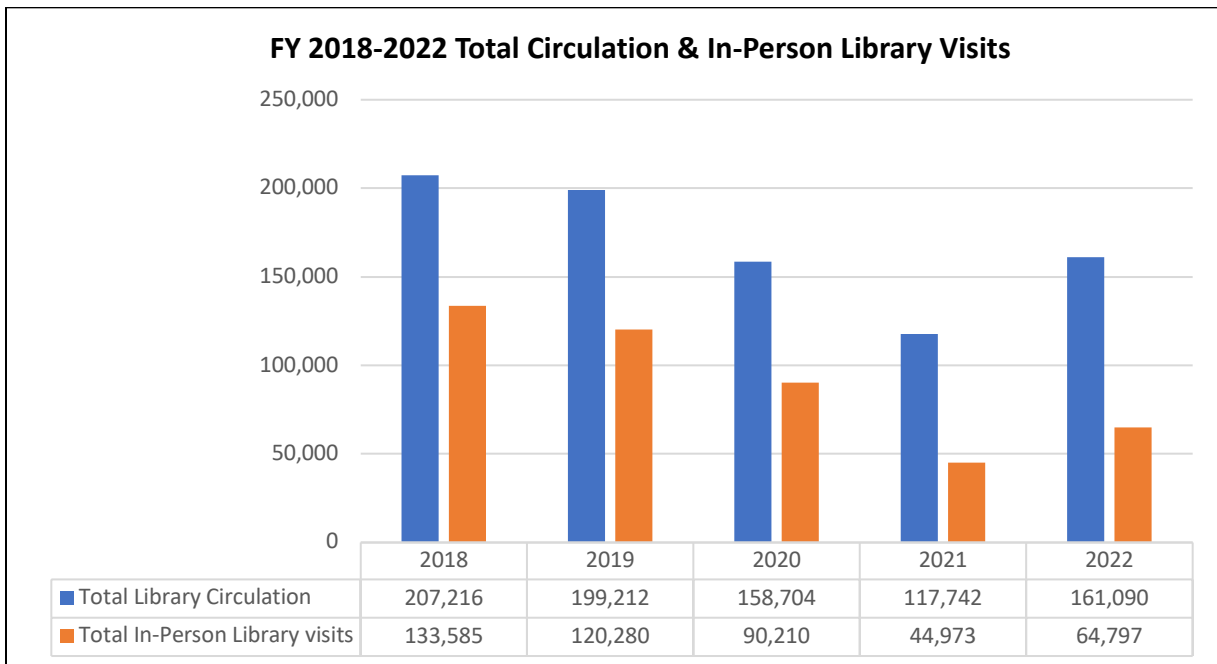|	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Electronic Bks	136,068	139,080	475,404	514,289	771,613
Total Audio	21,608	21,305	413,576	433,555	569,242
Catalogued Print Vols	117,928	114,642	109,752	109,506	108,389
Total Video	9,357	11,352	29,324	60,829	37,695

Annual Accomplishments – continued

ANNUAL EXPENDITURES

The increase in staff expenditures beginning in 2019 is mostly due to the hiring of part-time staff at the request of community library locations which need better support via paid staff. The pandemic (2020-2021) temporarily reduced some of the day-to-day operational costs.

FY 2018-2022 Total Expenditures Breakdown by Type

	Collections	Staff	Equipment	Contractual Svcs	Miscellaneous	Capital Outlay
2018	$172,344	$608,644	$19,834	$106,182	$162,830	$30,334
2019	$168,719	$649,986	$36,341	$115,545	$169,258	$0
2020	$172,742	$687,891	$11,050	$84,764	$136,187	$0
2021	$161,904	$698,833	$33,499	$108,664	$125,153	$0
2022	$194,507	$728,042	$40,296	$130,657	$131,237	$0

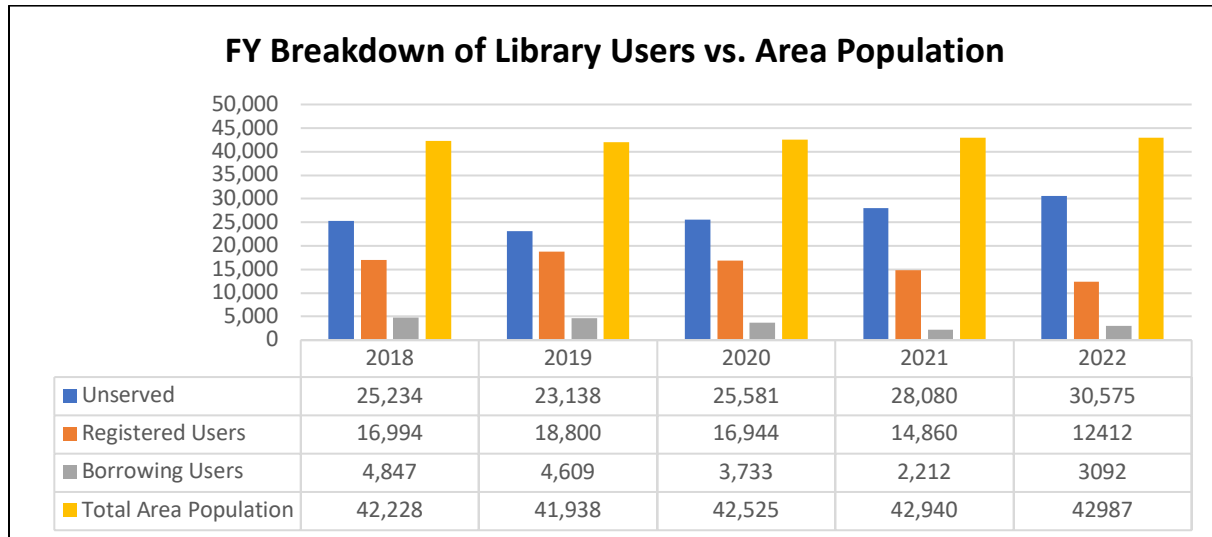**CIRCULATION & IN-PERSON VISITS**

Circulation represents the number of items checked out of the Library System per year. In-person visits represent the number of physical visits to buildings.

FY 2018-2022 Total Circulation & In-Person Library Visits

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Library Circulation	207,216	199,212	158,704	117,742	161,090
Total In-Person Library visits	133,585	120,280	90,210	44,973	64,797

7

CHALLENGES

A constant challenge for any public service organization is meeting the needs of as many citizens in its service area as possible. The statistics in the chart below is just one way to show that the Library has room for improvement. We need to reach more people and expand services. The planned building expansion will better allow us to achieve this goal.

FY Breakdown of Library Users vs. Area Population

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unserved	25,234	23,138	25,581	28,080	30,575
Registered Users	16,994	18,800	16,944	14,860	12412
Borrowing Users	4,847	4,609	3,733	2,212	3092
Total Area Population	42,228	41,938	42,525	42,940	42987

Note: Registered users are citizens with a library card. Registered Users are subtracted from the Total Area Population to obtain the number of Unserved citizens. Borrowing Users are anyone who used their card to borrow from the library. Total Area Population is a number provided by the Federal Government.

This report was researched and written by Nancy Upshaw of the Shenandoah County Library System Board of Trustees. For more information about the Library and expansion plan contact:

Sandy Whitesides
Director, Shenandoah County Library System
514 Stoney Creek Blvd
Edinburg, VA 22824
540-984-8200
swhitesides@countylib.org

Raymond Willis
Chair, Shenandoah County Library System Board of Trustees
rwbooks@earthlink.net