



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

“Connecting Our Community”

Avon Grove Library

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A Member of the Chester County Library System

OUR MISSION

We foster lifelong learning and deliver enriching experiences in a safe, welcoming environment accessible to all.

OUR VISION

We transform our community, connecting people with each other and the wider world.

PROGRAMS FOR OUR CHILDREN AND TEENS:

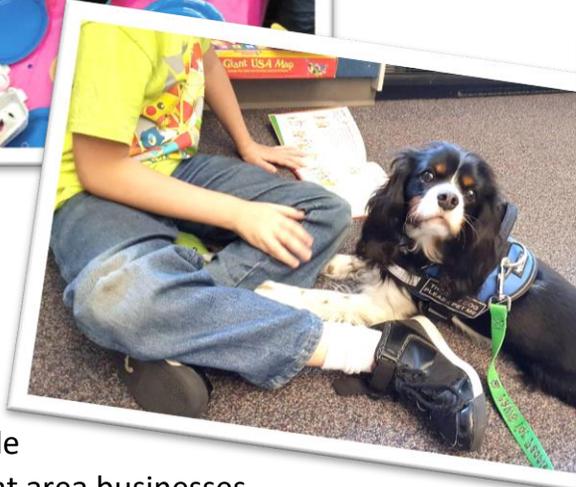
Where Avon Grove Library truly excels



In 2018 we were the **#1 single library in Chester County** for total attendance at all programs for children and teens.

We were #2 (second only to the County Library in Exton) in the number of youth programs offered for the year.

We reached a whopping total of **27,680 attendees at 918 youth programs** in 2018.



Programs for our kids were as diverse as they were numerous—**storytimes** inside

the library and at area businesses

such as Starbucks and Danskø; **Teen Service Club**; free

Books and Breakfast events with food, stories and crafts; **Lego Club**; **Teen Escape Room**; **GeoTrax Build & Play**; **Science in the Summer**; **Summer Reading** (our biggest

program of the year, with hundreds of kids taking part); **PAWS for Reading**, where kids could get comfortable with books by reading to service dogs; and many more.



EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT FOR ALL

In 2018, Avon Grove Library counted nearly 120,000 visitors, adding in-house visits to the number of people who attended our outreach programs.

We are a vital educational institution, providing equal opportunity for **self-directed learning, research assistance and instruction**, and **enriching experiences** for over 32,000 people of all ages and backgrounds in southern Chester County, Pennsylvania.

We deliver high-quality teaching and educational resources for everyone. Our mission is critical, because the public library is **the only American institution**

that provides lifelong learning and enrichment that's free at the point of service to people of all backgrounds. As a public library, we are helping to **develop the workforce, advance the economy, and improve the quality of life** for everyone.



I really liked the sound of Saxology ... Thanks for organizing music events at the library. - H. Rose



EXPERIENCES FOR ADULTS AS WELL AS CHILDREN

Programs such as concerts, crafts, book clubs, lectures, and films help us bring the Avon Grove community together. Library staff members worked hard all last year to ensure that we had something to offer everyone—adults as well as children and teens.

In 2018, we expanded programming for adults by 62% over 2017, with an increase in attendance of 235%. A total of 791 people attended 81 programs on topics from **beekeeping to supporting people with anxiety** to the local history of the notorious

Johnston Gang. Regular monthly programs such as **Craft & Create, Sit and Knit, and the Book Club for Adults** made up part of these numbers as well.

OUR BIGGEST EVENT OF 2018: Adding the Ringler Reading Room



Kim L. Ringler, director of Avon Grove Library for 22 years, passed away in December of 2016. The library received many generous donations in her memory, and we decided the best way to celebrate Kim's life would be to build a new reading room in the library she loved so much. The new room would not only allow us to remember Kim in a special way—it would also create a much-needed oasis in the library for quiet and study.

Kim's family graciously gave extra to help fund the new room to be named in her memory. We engaged Ed Rahme of THINK Architecture to design the room and an area company, Buck Run Builders, to do the construction. A ribbon cutting was held September 25. We had dozens of visitors, with remarks from several local dignitaries.



Kim Louise Ringler, 1956-2016



RINGLER

Reading Room



*September 25 Grand Opening:
Joe Sherwood, CCLS Executive Director*

PROVIDING EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

In 2018, Avon Grove Library provided 2,708 hours of open access to all residents of the seven municipalities making up our service area: Avondale Borough, Franklin Township, London Britain Township, London Grove Township, New London Township, Penn Township, and West Grove Borough.

A total of **109,008 people were counted in the library in 2018**, averaging over 360 visits per day we were open. With attendance at outreach programs (those outside the library) figured in, the **total customer count was 119,746 in 2018**.



Library specialists processed 4,310 new print and audio-visual items in 2018. A total of 5,375 outdated or unused items were also weeded from the collections. These changes helped to create an ever more current and useful

accumulation of resources for free education and enrichment. At the end of 2018, Avon Grove Library held a total of **44,283** print books, audiobooks, DVDs, CDs, magazines, newspapers, and kits.

The library loaned 140,527 books, DVDs, periodicals, ebooks, and other materials throughout the year, an average of about 19 items per borrower. Print and audio-visual materials are declining in popularity, while electronic books and e-audiobooks continue to be more and more heavily used. We are devoting more resources to electronic collections as a result.

The quality of our collections is demonstrated by the fact that customer requests for titles from outside libraries were few: in 2018, only 72 items were received for Avon Grove customers from libraries outside the Chester County system, while we sent 97 items to non-member libraries.

Our PCs and wifi access are free to all, and are becoming more and more popular. **Users logged 5,154 sessions on the library's Internet-connected PCs in 2018**, over 7% more than in 2017; 2017's total was almost 10% than in 2016. This figure does not count those who used the library's wifi system to connect their personal devices. **Total wifi usage reached over 19,000 hours in 2018 – 32% more hours than in 2017.**

GIVING RESEARCH ASSISTANCE AND INSTRUCTION

Avon Grove Library's knowledge experts assisted customers with research and information questions 4,113 times in 2018, a figure over 5% higher than the previous year's number of 3,916. Outreach and other classes taught literacy skills to thousands of children and teens.

ASSISTANCE FROM LIBRARY SUPPORTERS

Our **Friends of the Avon Grove Library group** held several fundraisers in 2018. These included bake sales on Election Day, raffles of an American Girl doll, toy basket, and Lego construction set, sales of snacks in the library, and collections of used shoes to be sold. We very much appreciate the Friends' ongoing enthusiasm and support for the library.

We were also served by an excellent group of adult and teen volunteers. A group of **69 teens and adults gave a total of 1,244 volunteer hours** to the library in 2018, doing everything from shelving books and DVDs to assisting with crafts at children's programs to stuffing envelopes for library mailings. Our volunteers are very active and we really appreciate all that they do.

FUNDING: OUR VITAL SUPPORT

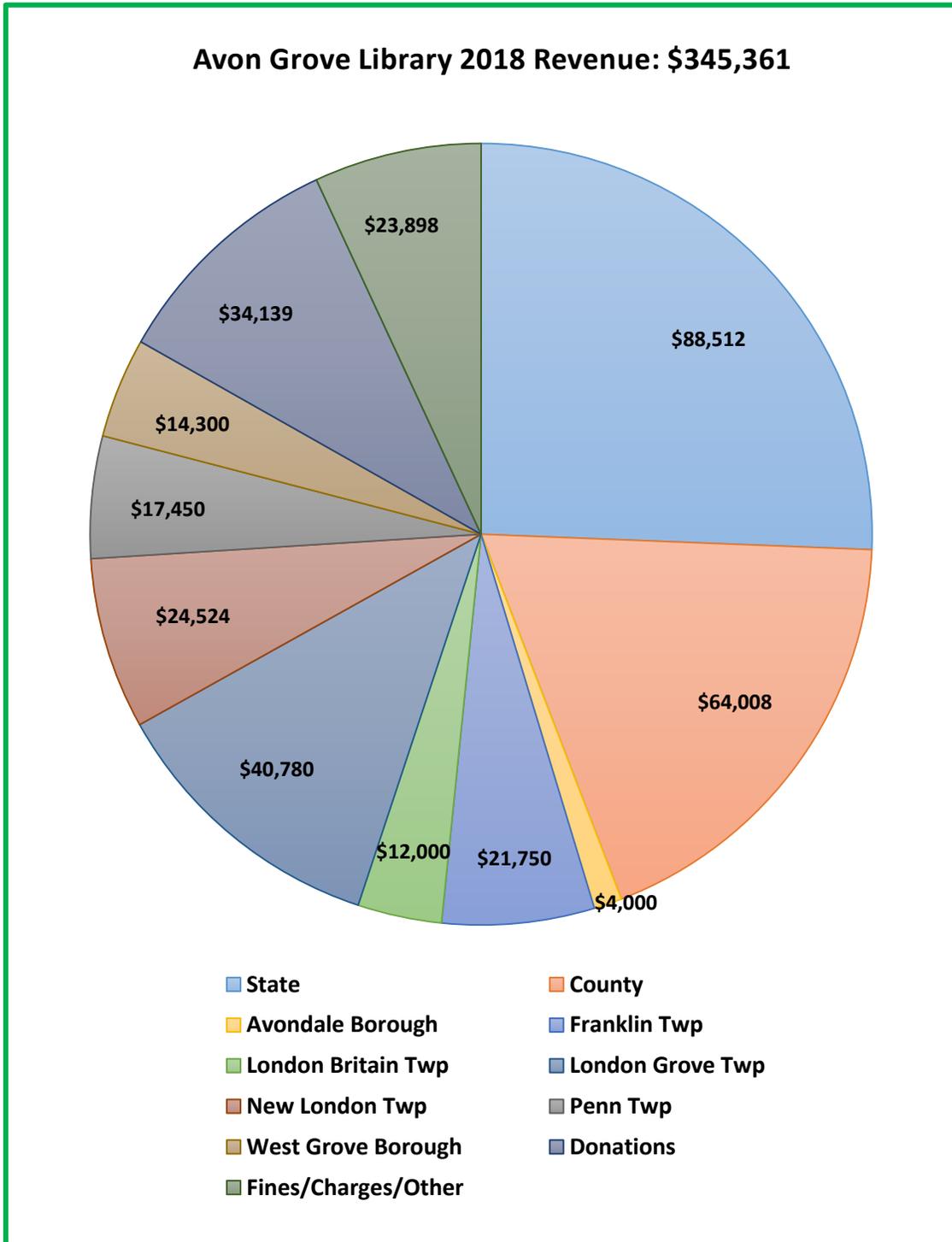
Avon Grove Library receives no federal funding directly. Rather, federal funds are channeled through Pennsylvania's Commonwealth Library via the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Our funding comes from the Commonwealth, through the Chester County Library System, from the local municipalities we support, and from customers and donors.

In 2018, **the library received a total of \$345,361 in revenue:**

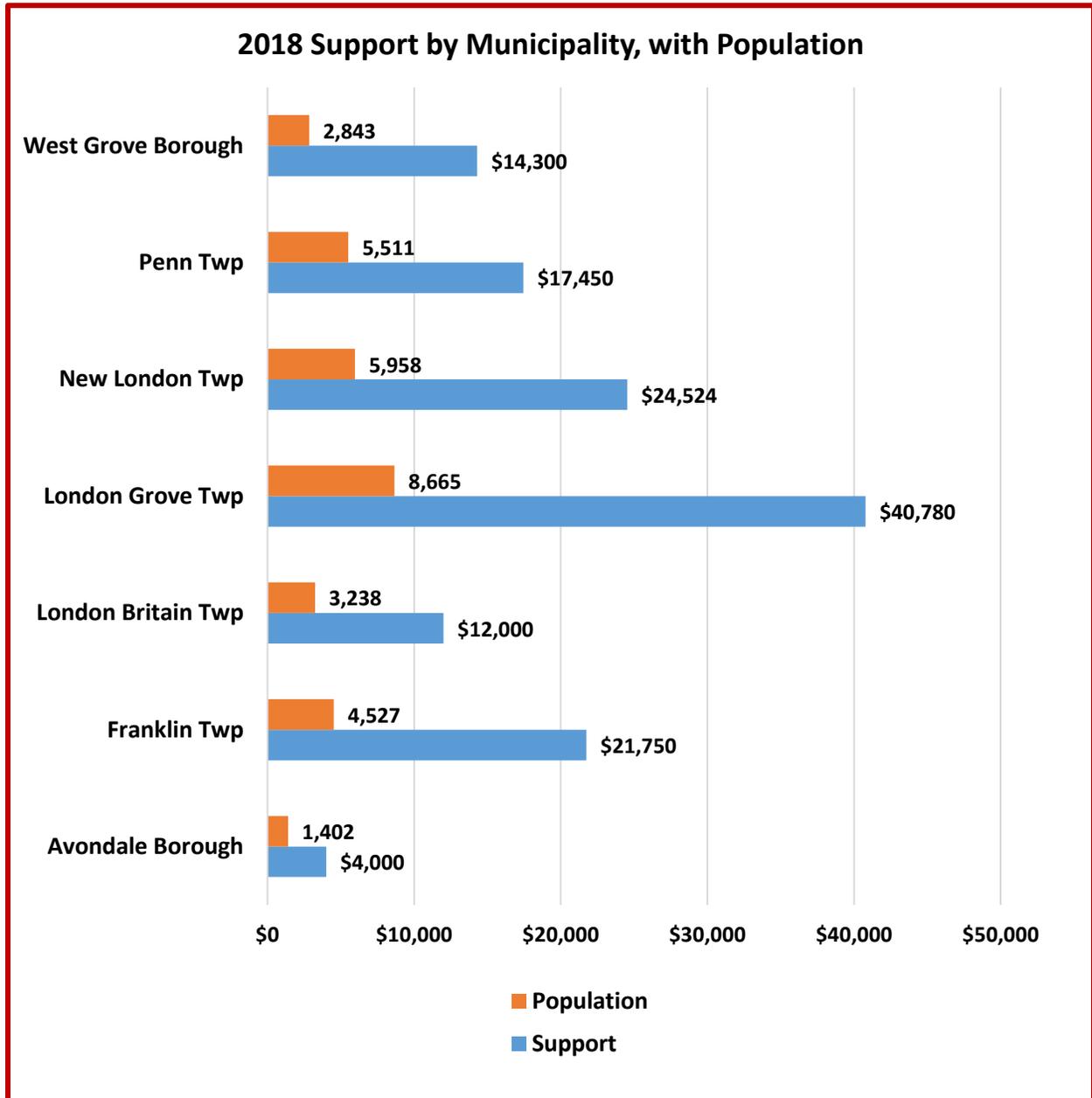
Sources of 2018 Revenue

Municipal funding	\$134,804
State funding	\$88,512
County funding	\$64,008
Donations	\$34,139
Fees/Charges/Other	\$23,898
TOTAL	\$345,361

This chart shows our revenue with municipalities broken out separately:

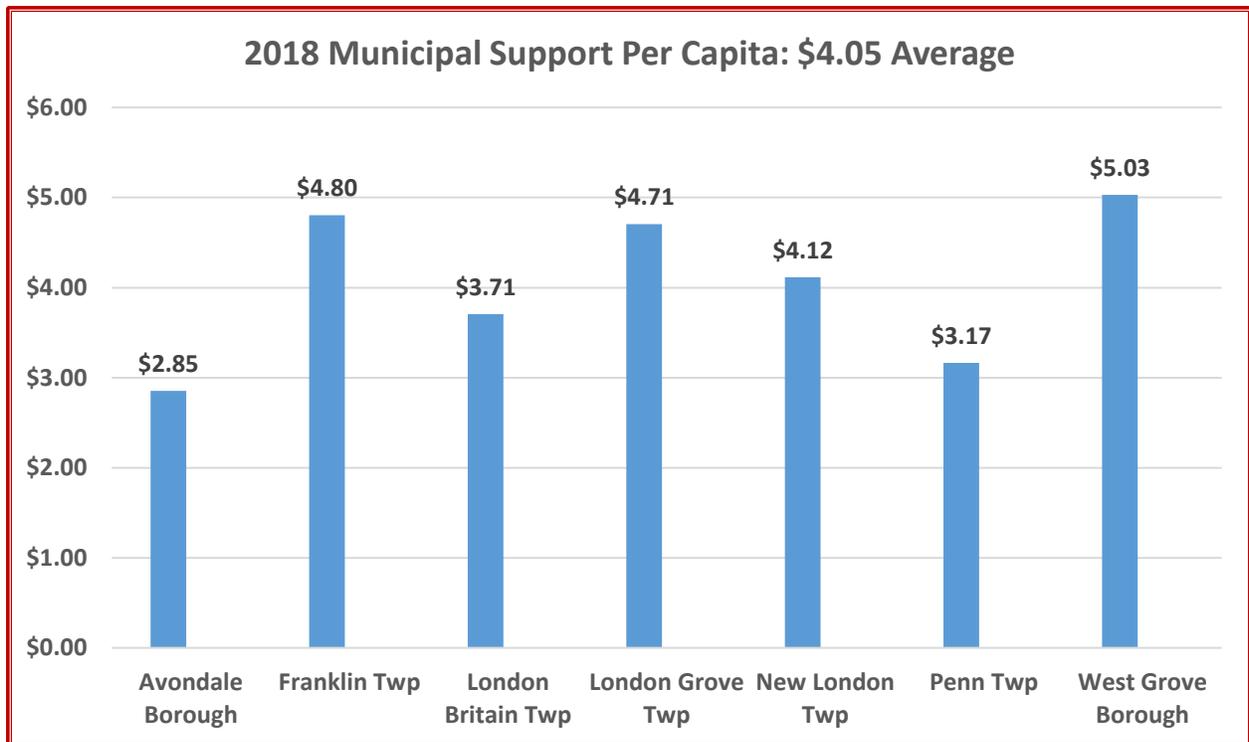


Local municipalities gave their support in varying amounts:



The total population of our service area is 32,144. (All numbers are taken from the 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimates.) Using these figures, municipal funding ranged from \$2.85 to \$5.03 per capita.

Average municipal support per capita was \$4.05 in 2018, up \$0.20 from 2017's average of \$3.85. We are very grateful to those municipalities who generously increased their support in the past year.



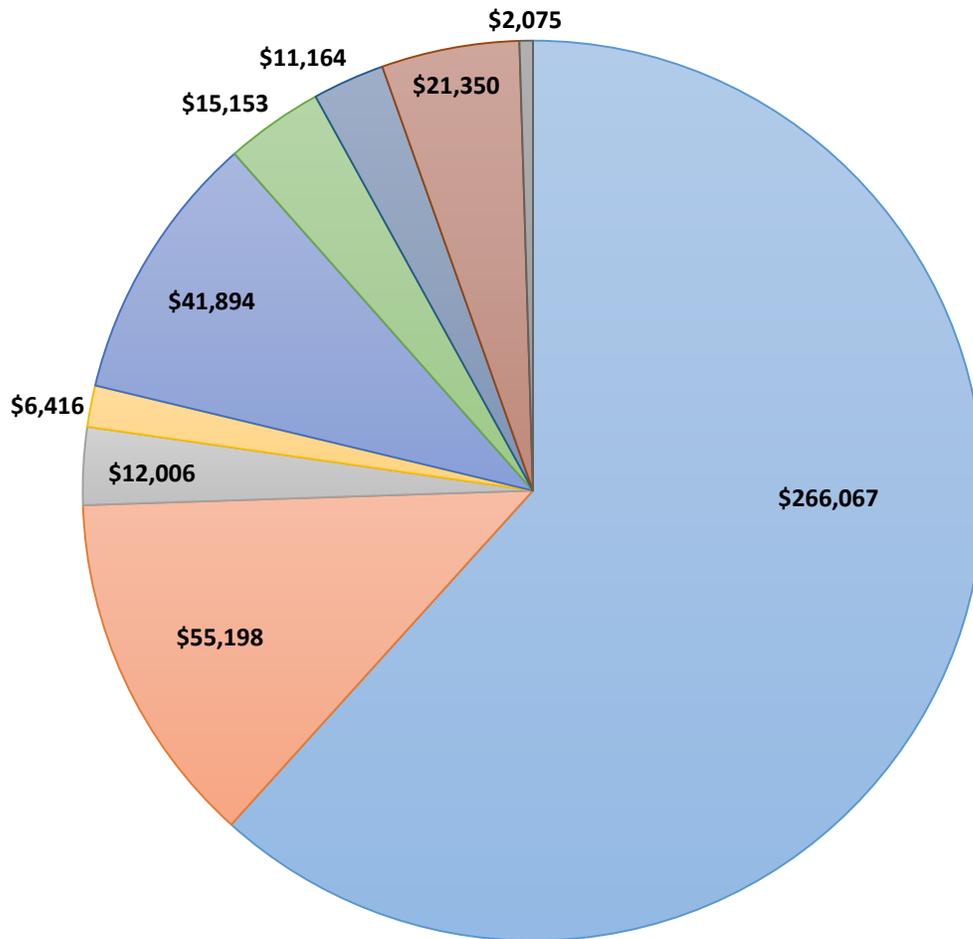
SPENDING: OUR PRIORITIES IN 2018

A perusal of our revenues and expenditures will show that the budget did not balance as planned in 2018. Though we spent less in many areas than originally budgeted, we still did not take in enough revenue to meet our spending. Several factors accounted for this:

- A higher-than-expected Maintenance line due to the need to immediately replace the aging HVAC system
- Lower than expected revenues in certain areas of fundraising (for instance, we did not receive grants that we applied for)
- The Board decided to transfer funds to help pay off much of the remaining balance of the building loan still owed by the library

Despite these factors, we were able to meet our expenses by making use of “cushion” funds in our bank and investment accounts. We also still met (with a good margin to spare) the state required minimum of 12% of operating expenses to be spent directly on library materials.

Avon Grove Library 2018 Expenditures: \$431,323



- Personnel
- Library Materials
- Library Programming
- Supplies
- Cleaning & Maintenance
- Utilities
- Services & Insurance
- Debt Reduction, Interest, Fees & Transfers
- Capital Outlay

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Looking ahead to 2019-2023

We spent a good part of 2018 making plans for the next few years to come. Our ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee included trustees, library staff, and library users and volunteers. These 2019-2023 goals were approved by the Board:

To guide us through the next five years, the library has established the following strategic directions:

1. Making the Library a Cornerstone of Community Engagement: The library helps address the desire of residents to maintain a “small town” environment and a sense of community. The library is moving beyond its traditional information role and becoming a dynamic place for civic, cultural, and social exchange. Increasingly, the library serves as a community commons, with an organizational culture that fosters a spirit of connections and programs that catalyze interaction and collaboration.
2. Promoting Access to Lifelong Learning and Literacy: The library helps address the need for technical and information literacy skills as well as self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.
3. Sparking Innovation: The library will endeavor to meet the needs of our changing community in the 21st century, providing our residents with access to information and tools to help them achieve their goals.
4. Demonstrating Operational Excellence:
 - *Partnership Growth and Financial Development*: The library recognizes the need to expand our financial support beyond municipal funding, developing partnerships with local businesses and corporations.
 - *Professional Development*: The library will provide opportunities for its trustees and library staff to expand knowledge and experience through professional development opportunities.
 - *Facility Development*: The library will plan for functional, efficient and optimal use of the existing space within the building.

Specific objectives in our new Strategic Plan include building a library makerspace, reaching out to our Hispanic residents, connecting with our local non-profits and businesses, and formulating a space plan for the entire library to improve our facilities.

THE ROAD AHEAD

2018 brought many challenges and opportunities for Avon Grove Library: new additions including the Ringler Reading Room; new programs and exhibits to enhance customer experience; changes in personnel; and the need to keep developing current and attractive library collections and programs, among others. I am very proud of our hard-working and accomplished library staff, volunteers, Friends of the Library, and trustees for doing all that they did to make the past year so successful.

Throughout 2019, our team of dedicated library instructors and specialists looks forward to advancing the library's mission ever further, promoting equal access to learning resources and curricula, providing opportunities for self-directed education as well as enjoyment, delivering research assistance and instruction, and offering enriching experiences to people of all ages.

*Lori A. Schwabenbauer, MSLS
Director, Avon Grove Library*



Why I love the library: The Events
and Books are really fun and
cool!
Love,
mary

LIBRARY STATISTICS for 2018

In-House Door Count	109,008
Outreach Program Attendance	10,738
TOTAL CUSTOMER COUNT	119,746
LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS	7,447
Children's and Teen Programs (*Avon Grove was second only to the County Library in the number of programs for youth held in 2018)	918
Attendance at Youth Programs (*Avon Grove had the top attendance of any single library in Chester County for 2018 youth programs)	27,680
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Programs for Youth	61
Attendance at STEM Programs	2,914
Adult Programs	81
Attendance at Adult Programs	791
TOTAL PROGRAMS	999
TOTAL ATTENDANCE	28,471
RESEARCH & INFORMATION QUESTIONS	4,113
TOTAL PHYSICAL COLLECTIONS (print books and magazines, music CDs, audiobooks on CD, and movie DVDs)	44,773
TOTAL EBOOKS & E-AUDIOBOOKS (collection shared with all Chester County libraries)	37,366
Juvenile Print Book/Magazine Circulation	65,872
Adult Print/CD Book Circulation	48,273
OverDrive Circulation (Ebooks, E-audiobooks)	15,878
Print Magazine Circulation (Adults)	1,647
Online Magazine (Flipster) Circulation	2,082
Audio-Visual Circulation (music, movies)	6,775
TOTAL CIRCULATION	140,527
Library Computer Use - SESSIONS	5,526
Library Computer Use - HOURS	3,747
Wifi Use - HOURS	19,559
VOLUNTEERS	69
VOLUNTEER HOURS	1,244