

# 2023 Annual Report

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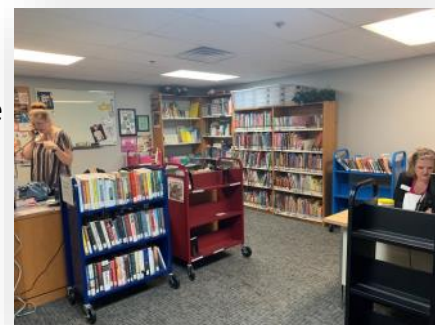
**BEE CAVE**  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

# Director's Report 2023

As the year began, we saw a dramatic increase in the number of visitors compared to the previous January, and the trend continued in the following months. Libraries around the country had experienced a dramatic drop-off in attendance during the pandemic and struggled to return to their earlier level of service upon reopening. By the end of 2023, the number of people visiting Bee Cave Public Library was nearly back to pre-Covid levels, and our program attendance was thriving. Summer in particular felt like old times, with hundreds of excited children and their parents signing up for Summer Reading, attending programs, and checking out stacks of their favorite titles. Other programs like Teen Advisory Board saw a huge increase in numbers with TAB meetings regularly drawing 40 or 50 teens. While we delighted in a return to busy programs, the crowds highlighted our ongoing need for more space.



The library moved into its current location in December of 2007, occupying 4,200 square feet on the ground floor of City Hall. By early 2008, we moved Storytime upstairs to Community Room B because the number of people attending overwhelmed the space inside the library. In 2013-14, the City hired consultants to study the library's need for more space and then expanded the scope to include other city departments as well. After determining that the library needed at least 12,000 SF to accommodate the demand at the time, no action was taken due to projected costs. Over the years, as the library added programs and visitors, we adapted to utilize any space we could find, holding special events in Council Chambers and doing crafts and games in the atrium. Sharing the community rooms with other city departments presented scheduling challenges, and the use of those rooms for early voting caused us to lose several weeks of programs each year. Staff offices were gradually built out in the storage space on the second floor over several years to accommodate our growing staff.



*At right, the technical services office in the storage area on the second floor, where new books are received, cataloged, processed and made ready for the shelves.*

With the addition of a new library to the City's Capital Improvements Plan in 2022 and the hiring of a team to design and build it, we have spent 2023 thoroughly analyzing our needs, gathering input from the community, and mapping out what a modern, flexible library building for Bee Cave would look like. We appreciate the support of the elected officials and the community as we look to the future of Bee Cave Public Library.

— Barbara Hathaway, Library Director

## Mission Statement

*The Bee Cave Public Library will provide intellectual, cultural, educational, and recreational resources in a variety of formats. The library will offer an inviting environment, promote lifelong learning, and foster a sense of community.*

# Annual Statistics

## 2023 BY THE NUMBERS Bee Cave Public Library

### VISITS

70,000 Visitors



*Teen tie-dye program on the plaza*

### PROGRAMS

165 Programs for all age ranges

### PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

9,700 Attended programs



*Crafts at What's New Wednesday*

### CHECKOUTS

72,571 Physical Items Circulated

28,251 Digital Items Downloaded



*Books and Bees Festival on the lawn*

*"I want to let you know how special this library is to my family. It's small and my kids haven't been able to use whisper voices for more than 10 minutes, but we love it so much! Everyone is warm and inviting." — Carly C.*

# Library Staff & Operations

Public Services Manager Gretchen Hardin was promoted to Assistant Library Director in June but continued in her previous role of overseeing all programming into the fall. The proposed new library will require additional staff to manage and operate. Our goal is to add positions gradually and train new staff in advance to allow for a smooth transition when the new library opens to the public. A new librarian position was approved for the FY 2023-24 budget to help manage our expanding teen and tween programs.



*Gretchen Hardin  
Assistant Library Director*

# New Library Planning

With the selection of the Revival property as our building site, and the approval of Lake Flato Architects, 720 Design, Turner & Townsend, and Hoar Construction, the process of designing the new library began in earnest. Working closely with the library staff, our consultants opened the community input phase by conducting an online survey that received 425 responses. Library staff visited multiple libraries in North and Central Texas along with the architecture and design team to see trends in library design and understand the impact of a multi-story library on operations and staffing. Vision boards were created with photographs from selected libraries of potential features of the new library for the public to consider. These boards were presented for public input on multiple occasions including the Books and Bees Festival, a City Council meeting, after Storytimes, during a Friends of the Library meeting, at a Teen Advisory Board (TAB) meeting, and during in-person focus groups. Community members were given \$500 in “Bee Cave Bucks” and allowed to “vote” on their favorite features by showing which feature they would spend money on. A total of 450 families and individuals gave input using the Vision Boards.



*Library patrons gave input on the vision boards after Storytime.*



*Maureen Arndt of 720 Design answered questions about the new library during Books & Bees.*

The final avenue of gathering input consisted of two days of focus groups with key stakeholders including elected officials, community leaders, storytime families, library super-users, and members of various interested groups such as the Teen Advisory Board, the Friends of the Library, current and former library employees, members of other city departments, and so on. Each focus group was led by Maureen Arndt from 720 Design who asked questions about how the stakeholders used the library, what they envisioned for its future, and how the library could better serve the community.

High among the top features identified by the community were

- more space for materials,
- quiet space to read, work, or study, and
- outdoor spaces for programs, gatherings, or reading.



*City and library staff meet with design team*

## Library Collections

The library's physical collection of books, audiobooks, and DVDs for children, teens, and adults is holding steady at just over 30,000 items, the maximum that can fit in our current space. To make room for newly published items, our librarians regularly “weed” each collection to keep the library’s offerings fresh and up-to-date by deleting materials that are not circulating as often. In the survey to gather community input about the proposed new library, two-thirds of respondents requested more space for books, magazines, DVDs, and other physical materials.

Our digital collection now numbers more than 48,500 items through our membership in the Central Texas Digital Consortium. The usage of digital materials has increased every year and now accounts for 28% of our overall circulation.

*Library shelves have reached maximum capacity requiring staff to actively “weed” the collection to make room for new books, audiobooks, and other materials. Discarded items are donated to nonprofits.*



As an accredited member of the Texas State Library system, we have access to \$108,000 worth of databases across a wide range of research fields at a tiny fraction of the cost. We also subscribe directly to numerous databases including Ancestry for genealogy research; Data Axle Reference Solutions for business research; Mango Languages for language learning; Access World News for full-text news sources; TumbleBooks for children’s literature and games; and streaming video services, Access Video On Demand and Access Video: Just for Kids. Digital versions of the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* are also available to Bee Cave library members.

*“I would love a wider selection of books. I’ve also heard about libraries where you can check out tools/ cooking equipment/things other than books and movies and that sounds really neat.” — survey respondent*

# Programs

The library offered 165 programs in 2023 that were attended by 9,700 people. These programs ran the gamut from intimate storytimes for a dozen parents and their infants to large, interactive storytimes for toddlers with movement and music built in. These popular family storytimes regularly attract up to a hundred people. School-aged children can choose from Lego-building or craft programs, magicians or reptile shows, and everything in between. We have STEAM programs for tweens and service projects for teens. The Teen Advisory Board has quadrupled in size from previous years and now regularly sees 40 to 50 teens meeting monthly and planning service projects like a job board for teens or a blood drive for the community. In planning for the new library, we hope to incorporate a multi-purpose room that will be used for larger library programs and be available for rent by the community after library hours. A dedicated storytime room would allow us to offer more storytimes year-round without having to vacate our space during weeks of early voting.

## For Adults

Book Club, monthly  
 What's New Wednesday, monthly  
 Lake Travis Reads, annually



*Bee Cave Book Club has added many new members and meets in the library after hours.*

## For Teens

Teen Advisory Board, monthly  
 Teen Service Project  
 Teen volunteers at Merry Making Saturday, Rolling Sculpture Car Show, and Books and Bees Festival  
 Summer Reading Teen programs  
 Virtual Teen Poetry Nights

## For All Ages

Spring Into Reading  
 Books and Bees Festival  
 Summer Reading Program  
 Merry Making Saturday

## For Children

Family Storytime (twice weekly)  
 Baby Bumblebees Lapsit Storytime (weekly)  
 Family Place Parenting Workshop (twice-yearly for 5 weeks)

Summer Reading Programs (June-July)

Included programs for all ages such as the Birds of a Feather Show, Family Fort Building, Bubble Party, Reptile Show, and Star Party, as well as age-specific programs such as Special Storytimes, Drive-In Movie, Diary of a Bee Cave Kid, and more



*More than 40 teens from area high schools regularly attend TAB meetings to work on service projects and help at library events.*

## For Tweens

Bee-Tweens every other month for grades 3-5  
 Lego Club every other month for grades K-6  
 Tween programs during Summer Reading

# Summer Reading Program 2023

## “All Together Now”

The theme for Summer Reading in 2023 chosen by the Texas State Library was “All Together Now,” a nod to libraries and communities returning to normal after the Covid years. Our team put a “groovy 70s” spin on it with our tie-dyed tee shirts and neon-colored décor. The annual Summer Reading Program (SRP) is a hallmark of public libraries around the country and a favorite tradition of ours. Designed to keep kids reading over the summer so they retain whatever progress they made during the school year, SRP features a wide array of programs and incentives to get families to visit the library and read for fun. Readers were encouraged to log their minutes on the Beanstack app, and children who read at least 500 minutes were rewarded with a personal poster that would hang on the library wall and a copy to take home. They were also entered in drawings for exciting prizes and gift cards provided by the Friends of the Library. Teens and adults who logged their reading were eligible for drawings of gift cards to local stores and restaurants.



*Above Bubble Party on the lawn at left, and Twisty Art balloon “swords.” at right.  
Below , library staff and kids’ posters hanging in the library.*



*“We’ve been a part of this summer reading program for years. Thanks for helping our kids enjoy reading!” — Elizabeth G.*

## Books and Bees Festival

Our second annual Books and Bees Festival took place on April 1-2, 2023. Sponsored by Keystone Bank and supported by generous donations from the Bee Cave Economic Development Corporation and the Friends of the Library, the festival on Saturday featured author talks and panels, demonstrations by picture book illustrators, crafts and games for kids, bee education from an area beekeeper, free wildflower seeds and planting instructions, and a children's concert, as well as book sales by Barnes & Noble and giveaways from the Friends of the Library. More than 2,000 people participated in the festival. On Sunday, a local author fair was paired with a honey-tasting contest featuring Bee Cave beekeepers alongside the Galleria's popular Farmers Market.



*Activities took place inside City Hall, out on the lawn and plaza, and inside Barnes & Noble, during the second Books and Bees Festival.*

## Merry Making Saturday 2023

Our final big program of the year was our annual holiday celebration, Merry Making Saturday, featuring characters, crafts, and activities based on Disney's *Frozen* to complement the City's popular skating rink, Bee Cave On Ice. More than 650 people attended the afternoon festivities and enjoyed live harp music in the library, crafts and games in the atrium, and storytime in Council Chambers. The library offers this program to encourage shoppers to take a break from the hustle and bustle of the holidays and enjoy some family time together at the library.



*At left, enthusiastic fans pose for a photo in the library. At right, teen volunteers help kids with a marshmallow game.*



# Family Place Library™ Accreditation

Bee Cave Public Library has been accredited as a Family Place Library™ since 2017 and the program continues to set us apart from neighboring libraries. Our librarians have undergone extensive training in the critical role libraries can play in a young child's growth and development. The goal of the national program is to encourage libraries as institutions to have a family-friendly environment and transform them into community centers for literacy, early childhood development, parent education, family support, and community information. As part of this mission, we provide print and digital collections of parenting resources and offer a special workshop called 1\*2\*3 PlaySmart for toddlers and their parents to connect them with community resources and reinforce the importance of "learning through play" for children. During the workshop, the community room is laid out with a variety of interactive toys and is particularly helpful for first-time parents to reinforce their role as their child's first teacher. Each week a different resource specialist is available during the program to discuss topics like early literacy, speech and language development, and nutrition with the parents in a casual, one-on-one setting. A final component of the Family Place program is providing a play area inside the library year-round to reinforce the importance of "learning through play." Hundreds of children and their parents visit our small play area every month and we look forward to expanding this offering in the new building.



The Family Place play area in the library is very popular.

## Social Media



A video featuring one of our teen shelvees saying, "This is what zero dollars an hour looks like," had thousands of views on both TikTok and Instagram and highlighted the work done by our dedicated volunteers.

Social media continues to be an effective and enjoyable way to connect with our patrons. We hear that people find out about events by following us on Instagram or Facebook and also check those sites first to find out about library updates. It's fun for our staff to get involved and patrons will also tell us that they feel like they know us from our social media presence.

Social media is also a practical way to announce updates and community partnerships and to remind patrons of our other services, like digital newspaper access. We've been able to share updates with the public about the new library's progress, such as the discovery tours and the design workshop. With over 3,300 followers on Facebook, 2,000 on Instagram, and 2,100 on TikTok, we have a strong library social media base.



Social media is an effective and inexpensive tool to make announcements about library programs and services.



Lake Travis Fire Rescue visited our Family Place play area during National Fire Prevention Week.

# Financial Report

## Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Original Library Budget	\$ 1,016,928
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 872,891
Maintenance & Operations	\$ 172,406
Professional Services	\$ 10,516
Capital Outlay	\$ 0

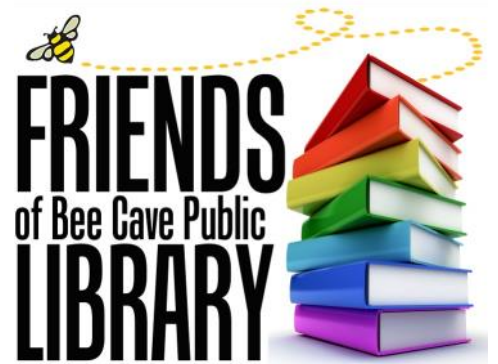
The budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 included 9 full-time and 3 part-time positions for a total of 10.5 FTEs. The 0.5 FTE was used to hire two summer interns who helped out with programming and circulation.

## Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Original Library Budget	\$ 1,150,372
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## Friends of the Library

The Friends of Bee Cave Public Library is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation founded in 2006 to support the library through fundraising, volunteering, and advocacy. The group's annual fundraiser is the Rolling Sculpture Car Show, traditionally held on the last Sunday in October. The show raised \$12,000 in 2023 through sponsorships and registration fees, thanks in part to a generous sponsorship provided by Covert Bee Cave. Volunteers from local car clubs, the Friends group, and our Teen Advisory Board helped put on the show under the leadership of organizer and Friends member Doug Chambers. Funds raised by the show supported the Books and Bees Festival as well as scholarships for graduating teen volunteers and prizes and incentives for the Summer Reading Program.



*The Friends presented \$7,000 in scholarships to ten graduating seniors who had donated their time and talents to the library.*

# BEE CAVE PUBLIC LIBRARY

## 2023 ORGANIZATION CHART



**Gretchen Hardin**  
Assistant Director



**Barbara Hathaway**  
Library Director

City Manager

Library Director

Assistant Director



**Rita Bauer**  
Circulation Supervisor

Public Services Manager (vacant)

Technical Services Librarian

Circulation Supervisor



**Melissa Slaughter**  
Public Services Librarian

Public Services Librarian

Public Services Librarian, PT

Youth Services Specialist, PT



**Terry Lewis**  
Public Services Librarian, PT



**Megan Fischer**  
Technical Services Librarian



**Jennifer Vickery**  
Library Clerk

Library Clerk II

Library Clerk II

Library Clerk

Library Clerk

Library Intern, PT (seasonal, vacant))



**Teri Robertson**  
Library Clerk II



**Stephanie Shelton**  
Library Clerk II



**Angela Rovetto**  
Library Clerk

*NOTE: This chart reflects the library organization at the end of Fiscal Year 2022-23. The budget at that time included 9 full-time and 3 part-time positions for a total of 10.5 FTEs. During FY 2023, Gretchen Hardin was promoted from Public Services Manager to Assistant Library Director leaving her former position vacant for part of the year.*