

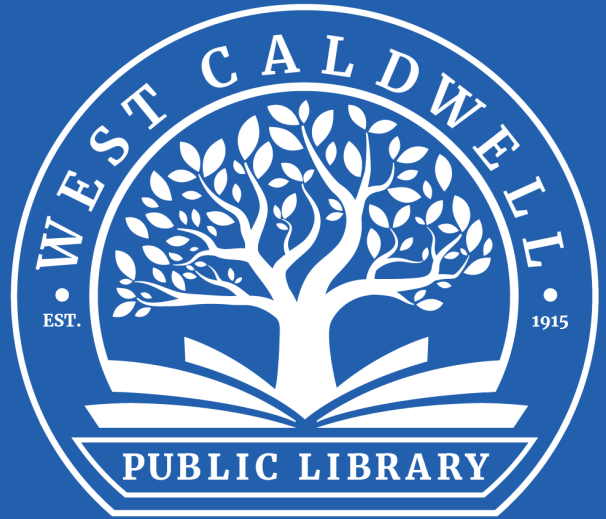


WEST CALDWELL
Public Library

30 Clinton Rd, West Caldwell, NJ • 973-226-5441 • wcpnj.org

2024 Annual Report





Founded in 1915, the West Caldwell Public Library (WCPL) serves a suburban population of 11,000 residents six days a week. Its mission is to foster a love of reading and spirit of exploration among patrons through staff support, a well-curated collection, and diverse programming. The Library's collection includes books, DVDs, board and yard games, technology, and museum passes. Partnering with local artists, organizations, and educators, Library programs nurture a sense of community and provide opportunities for self-enrichment. Patrons are encouraged to become who they want to be at WCPL. Please visit wcplnj.org for hours of operation and current services.

Mission

The Library **nurtures** and **builds community**. We foster a love of reading and a **spirit of exploration** through access to our resources and programs. **Become who you want to be** at the West Caldwell Public Library.

Vision

Expanding the **experiences** of our **evolving** community.

West Caldwell Public Library Board of Trustees

Carol Otterbein, *President*

Maura Lincoln, *Secretary*

Marilyn Rubino, *Treasurer*

Mike Maguire, *Member-at-Large*

Deborah Podvey, *Member-at-Large*

Dr. Christopher Conklin, *Caldwell-West
Caldwell Board of Education*

Jacquelyn Stafford, *Superintendent's
Representative*

Councilman Joseph Cecere, *Mayor's
Representative*

Mayor Joseph Tempesta, *Ex Officio Member*

Director's Letter

As we reflect on another remarkable year at the West Caldwell Public Library (WCPL), I am filled with pride for the incredible progress we have made together and gratitude for the vibrant community that continues to thrive within our walls. The passion and dedication of our staff, volunteers, and patrons have made WCPL a true center of learning, creativity, and connection in our town. We are also sincerely thankful to the Mayor and Council of West Caldwell for their ongoing and generous support of our library.

Twenty-twenty-four was a dynamic year at WCPL, from new staff members to new technology, and even new branding. Along with our new logo, we also revitalized our digital communication to better stay in touch with our community.

We continue to offer diverse programming to meet the evolving needs of our patrons. This year, we even introduced several new programs that not only enriched the lives of those who participated, but also deepened our role as a vital community resource. Additionally, we strengthened our partnerships with local schools, senior citizens, and volunteer organizations.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the dedication of our amazing library staff. Our team keeps everything running smoothly day-in

and day-out, and every member plays a vital role in creating the welcoming and resourceful environment we are known for.

But our library would not be the special place that it is without you, our patrons. Your commitment to learning and enthusiastic support for our programs enables us to innovate and grow each year. Whether through joining in book clubs, attending lectures, or sharing ideas and feedback, your participation and input shapes our library growth.

As we look to the future, we are excited to expand even further. With upcoming projects that include new digital resources, a redesigned children's area, and upgraded public restrooms, we are committed to providing even more opportunities for learning, connection, and personal growth. We will continue to work tirelessly to meet the needs of every member of West Caldwell and to ensure that WCPL remains a place of engagement, education, and empowerment.

Sincerely,

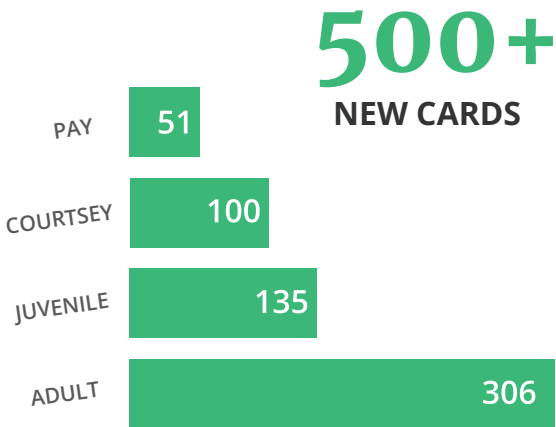


Samantha McCoy

2024

By the Numbers

PATRONS & SERVICES



96,857

2024 LIBRARY VISITS

2.4k+
COMPUTER USES

127
NOTARIZATIONS

14k
REFERENCE QUESTIONS

2.8k
STUDY ROOM USE

772

PROGRAMS OFFERED

8.7k
PROGRAM ATTENDEES

PROGRAMS

Youth Services

100+

YS PROGRAMS OFFERED

1.5k

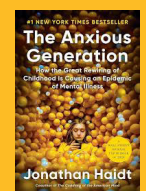
YS PROGRAMS ATTENDEES

Top Titles

Adult Fiction



Adult Non-Fiction



CIRCULATION

120,000+

TOTAL CIRCULATIONS



75k+
PRINT BOOKS



9.5k+
AUDIOBOOKS



10k+
E-BOOKS



3.9k+
DVDS



1.8k+
VIDEO GAMES



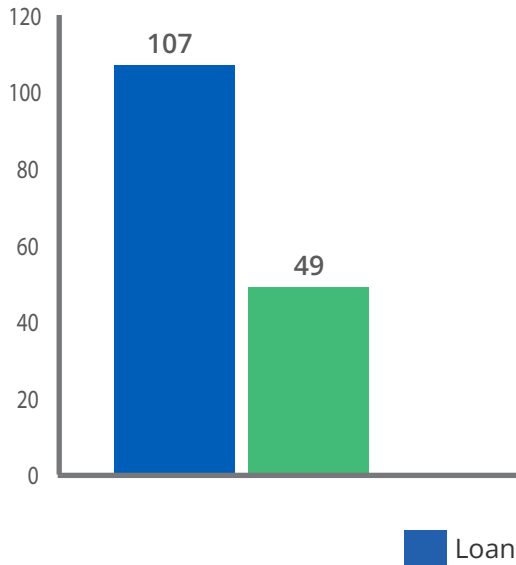
400+
LIBRARY OF THINGS

Monthly New Release Lists

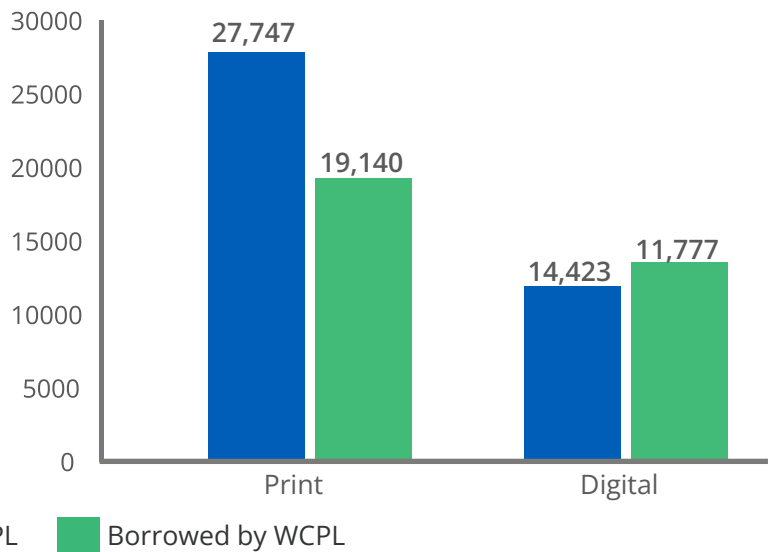
I think our circulation trends are also helped by the new book lists we create for patrons to look through. It allows patrons to see what it is they might want to borrow each month, and we have a lot of patrons who look forward to seeing what's coming out. This also helps me when I'm ordering books—I like to know what's most popular for our patrons, so I can focus my buying on things that people will actually read. Our patrons seem to love historical fiction, mysteries/thrillers and romance the best. - *Kaitlyn Capelakos, Adult Services Librarian*

Title	Author	Pub. Date
On Fire	Sarah Ballentine	Pub. 11/19/2024
Blue or Green	Jane Austen	Pub. 11/19/2024
The Village	Boris Johnson	Pub. 11/19/2024
The House of Sorrow	James Patterson	Pub. 11/19/2024
Remember My Name	James Patterson	Pub. 11/19/2024
True By Fire	Michelle Wildgen	Pub. 11/19/2024
Christmas in Berlin	Michael Chabon	Pub. 11/19/2024
An Impassioned Case	Phyllis Magallon	Pub. 11/19/2024
The Day After Tomorrow	Michael Chabon	Pub. 11/19/2024
All Three Queens	Blair Brown	Pub. 11/19/2024
The Rules of Survival	Becky Williams	Pub. 11/19/2024
The Girl on the Train	Louise Penny	Pub. 11/19/2024
The Night on the Street	Jodie Taylor	Pub. 11/19/2024
Search for the Gods	Michelle Magorian	Pub. 11/19/2024
The House of the Devil in New York	Philip Henschen	Pub. 11/19/2024
The Twelve	Karen M. Quinlan	Pub. 11/19/2024
Heartless in the National Archives	Rob Sparrow	Pub. 11/19/2024
Don't Get Me Wrong	Timothée de Fombelle	Pub. 11/19/2024
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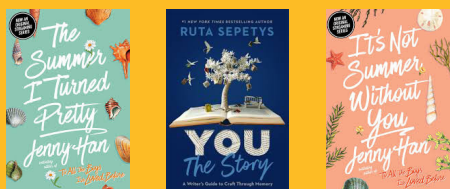
RECIPROCAL BORROWING WITH



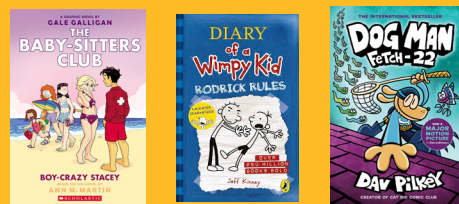
RECIPROCAL BORROWING WITH



Young Adult



Children



Marketing

New Look

1 Tree

A shared motif among West Caldwell institutions, the tree connects the Library to our community. It also calls to mind themes of learning and wisdom associated with the Tree of Knowledge, reinforcing WCPL's mission statement's commitment to exploration and self-development.



EST. 1915

2 Open Book

A tried and true symbol, the open book intuitively references the library's connection with literature, education, and curiosity. This is a familiar visual and maintains continuity with WCPL's previous logo, cultivating a sense of trust and credibility.

3 Established Date

Our century-long history with West Caldwell testifies to our connection and commitment to this community. Including this date in our logo exemplifies this relationship and establishes WCPL as a long-standing and reliable institution.



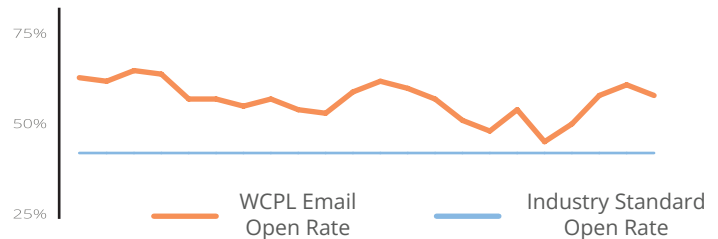
Along with our new logo, we redesigned our whole brand packaging, including color palette, font selections, and brand story. All of this is laid out in our brand new Style Guide.

Marketing Metrics

Email Newsletters

We incorporated our new brand guidelines into our email newsletter and increased frequency from bi-monthly to weekly to better promote our programming. While our open rates have historically matched or exceeded the industry standard of 41% (provided by Constant Contact), our revitalized newsletter campaign delivered consistently higher numbers.

56% vs **41%**
AVERAGE OPEN RATE vs INDUSTRY STANDARD



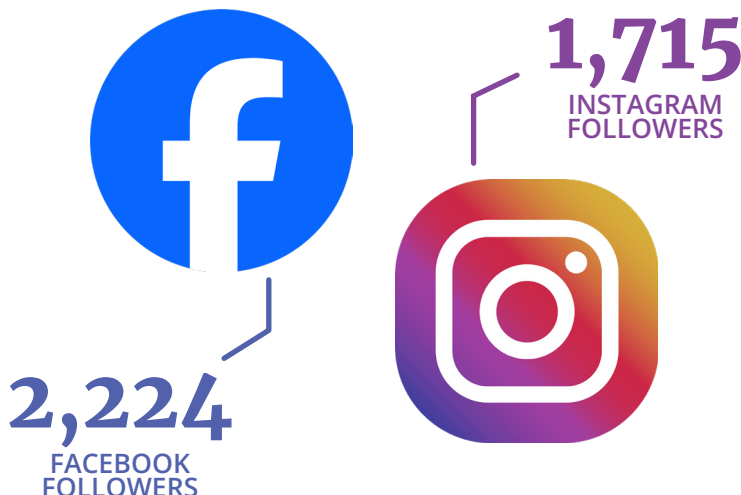
“*Such a fun event. My daughter loved reading to Chloe!*”

- Facebook comment about Read to a Therapy Pet Event

Social Media

Post Types:

- Tuesday New Releases
- Weekly Program Schedules
- Readers' Advisory
- Upcoming Events
- Library Announcements
- and more!



Programs

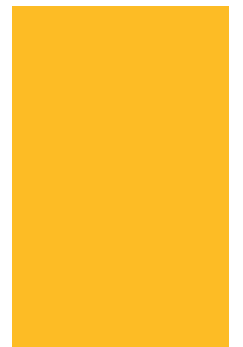
Adult Programs

- Art for Wellness
- Author Talks
- Bring Your Own Craft (BYOC)
- Check 'Em Out Book Club
- Chess Club & Lessons
- Crafts with Carol
- Don't Worry, Be Crafty
- English Language Learners Classes
- Friday Movie Matinees
- Guest Lectures
- Morning Book Club
- NAMI Peer Support Group
- Tiny Art Show
- Writers' Group
- and More...!



Youth Services Programs

- Caregiver & Me Craft Time
- Caregiver & Me Yoga
- Coral Reef STEAM Program
- Drop-In Crafts
- Family Puzzle Nights
- Gratitude Chain
- Guess How Many?
- Movement & Music with MP Music
- Read to a Therapy Pet with Creature Comfort Pet Therapy
- Rhyme Time
- Scavenger Hunts
- Storytime
- Stuffed Animal Sleepover
- Teens Volunteer!
- Zoophoria
- and More...!



Highlights

44 Books about 44 Presidents

Councilman Joe Cecere shared his journey reading 44 biographies on the first 44 presidents.

Author Talk: But Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow

Authors Laura Flam and Emily Sieu Liebowitz discussed their book, *But Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow: An Oral History of the '60s Girl Groups*. A book signing followed the panel.

Back to Bacharach and Beyond Concert

Duo Christine and Elliot Spero brought audiences on a musical tour through the discography of acclaimed composer, Burt Bacharach.

Tiny Art Show

West Caldwell residents of all ages displayed their artworks in the Library in November as a part of our annual Tiny Art Show.



“Thanks for featuring my little creation. There is always so much wonderful art at our library — I love it all!”

- Facebook comment about Tiny Art Show

Programs

Friends of WCPL

In September, WCPL celebrated 25 years with the Friends of the West Caldwell Public Library. Over the years, the Friends have contributed generous donations, fundraising efforts, and diverse programming. In 2024, they hosted an **Antique Appraisal**, a **Murder Mystery Party**, and a **Saturday Concert and Tea** with Sarah Solie, bringing dozens of community members into the Library.



New Large Format Printer

Funded in part from a donation from the Friends, WCPL acquired a new large-format printer in 2024. With this new addition, we can provide affordable and accessible large-format printing to West Caldwell and surrounding communities.

Promoting Wellbeing Through Art & Conversation

In alignment with the Library's mission to "nurture and build community," WCPL collaborated with local partners to promote psychological services and wellbeing for our community members.

Caldwell University's Mary Jo Rolli Codey Center returned to WCPL for Spring and Fall sessions of **Creativity for Wellness** (renamed **Art for Wellness** in the fall). Clinical interns from the university's Clinical Mental Health Counseling program facilitate weekly classes that engage participants in creative processes while providing psychoeducation to support emotional wellbeing and self-discovery. Each month centers a new artistic theme and each season culminates in a collaborative community artwork displayed in the Library



The Library hosts monthly meetings of the Essex-Passiac Chapter of **NAMI (The National Alliance on Mental Illness) Connection Recovery Peer Support Group**, providing a free and confidential space for adults experiencing mental illness to connect with support from a trained facilitator.

Integrity House's mobile recovery **REACH Van** pays regular visits to the Library, offering substance use assessments, health and wellness screenings, care coordination, Narcan distribution, and community resource sharing from the Library parking lot.

Outreach

Giving Back

Donation Drives

WCPL organized donation drives throughout the year to give back to our community. In March, the Library distributed solar eclipse glasses in exchange for food donations to benefit the Caldwell Food Pantry. The DPW lent their services to help transport all of the donations our community provided.

In the wake of Hurricane Helene, the Library partnered with the Roseland/ Caldwell VFW and the NJ State VFW on a collection for communities impacted by the storm. We served as a collection site and transported our community's donations to the NJ VFW headquarters for delivery.

The Caldwell Women's Club and Rotary Club host a variety of donation boxes at the Library, collecting goods such as gloves and socks to benefit local shelters.



Blood Drives

The New York Blood Center visited WCPL for two blood drives in 2024, one in March and the other in August. Locals noted how helpful it was to have a blood drive so close to home.



A West Caldwell mom is excited to help save three lives by donating blood.



WCPL in the Community



Inclusion Resource Fair

WCPL was invited to present at the 2nd Annual Inclusion Resource Fair in April, organized by the Caldwell-West Caldwell Special Education Parent Advisory Group. Hosted at James Caldwell High School, this event promotes resources and opportunities for parents and students in the community.

Touch a Truck

The Library hosted a booth at the Police Department's Touch a Truck event in June, handing out books and sharing details for upcoming events.



Trunk or Treat

In October, the Library crafted a mobile witch's laboratory and handed out candy at this year's Trunk or Treat, organized by the Police Department.



Outreach

WCPL values our relationship with the Crane's Mill retirement community. Many residents are loyal and enthusiastic library users, and we strive to engage with and accommodate the needs of this population.



Crane's Mill

Library Card Registration Drive

Staff from WCPL hosted a Library Card Registration Drive at Crane's Mill on October 18th. The West Caldwell PD joined us for this event, where we presented their new therapy dog, Chase, with a super-sized library card. Residents stopped by our table for snacks and information about the library.

Book Club

Library Director Samantha McCoy hosts a monthly book club at Crane's Mill. Members are sharp and engaged, producing compelling discussions on the latest group read.

Books2Go

The WCPL circulation team accommodates residents at Crane's Mill and throughout town who are house-bound with Books2Go home delivery, ensuring everyone in our community can access the library's resources.

Strategic Plan

2024 - 2026

Goal 1: Engagement

Expand creative and innovative methods to reach all patrons, increasing active library usage and engagement.

Increased multi-channel promotions, especially digital communication, to reach patrons
Ex.

- Transition from bi-monthly to weekly e-newsletter
 - +300% sends/month
 - +300% opens/month
 - +500% clicks/month
- Revitalization of social media with regular posts
 - +250% posts/month

**Comparing monthly averages before implementation of new strategy vs. after*

Goal 2: Expansion

Develop and execute a plan to enhance optimal use of space by evaluating public and staff space in relation to library services.

Acquired large-format printer in October, providing accessible and affordable large printing to our community
- 8 print projects in November and December

Art Gallery full 11/12 months, including display for Tiny Art and Art for Wellness programs

Rock Garden and related programs

Goal 3: Education

Deliver expanded educational opportunities for all ages and interests through innovative programming and training opportunities.

Adult Programs: Art for Wellness; Crafts with Carol; Don't Worry, Be Crafty; NAMI

Youth Services Programs: STEAM Program, Read to a Therapy Pet, Storytimes, Yoga, Crafts

AARP Tax Services

Goal 4: Empowerment

Encourage and support patrons to explore their interests and achieve their aspirations. Provide opportunities to share and exchange ideas within our community.

Programs: Morning Book Club, Check 'Em Out Book Club, Family Book & Movie Club; Teens Volunteer; Art for Wellness; NAMI

Voter Registration information, including Voting Guide web page



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