Antlers Public Library
2019-2020 Year in Review

The mission of the Antlers Public Library is to be the place where everyone gathers for learning, for leisure, and for life.

This mission was expanded into seven goals:

- 📖 Dynamic Collection
- 📖 Quality Technology
- 📖 Patron Service
- 📖 Literacy Training
- 📖 Sense of Community
- 📖 Safe Place
- 📖 Encourage Social Interaction

These seven goals are the standard against which each action of the library is measured.

Challenges to these Goals:

This year has brought several unprecedented challenges. The first being the loss of Fred Kimball. Fred had worked for years as the Pushmataha Literacy Council chair providing reading help and computer literacy to Pushmataha adults. With his death, we now have no literacy council (501c3 certified), no literacy tutors, and no way to train new tutors. Although the council has served dwindling numbers of students over the years, it is still a void in services used to provide *literacy training*.

2020 brought the COVID-19 pandemic. The library closed along with all non-essential businesses. We reopened to limits of eight people in the library, removal of chairs, tables and other items to encourage social distancing, and only three public access computers. We added curbside service, appointments for computer usage, and online applications for library memberships to aid those who needed to limit personal interactions. We instituted a disinfecting policy, returned item quarantine, a front desk plexiglass screen, and masks when employees are not behind the desk to diligently limit the transmission of the virus. We will continue to review these policies for best practices to provide a *safe place* until the time the CDC deems it safe to discontinue them, even to the detriment of our goals to *encourage social interaction* and create a *sense of community*.

The pandemic also revealed some positive moments. The outside wireless access points have been a true blessing during the pandemic. Having the library's Wi-Fi available in both parking lots allowed residents to access online classes and other Internet based services while staying safe in their cars. We limited the access per person to a bandwidth suitable for viewing videos,

while not allowing any one person to take up the whole bandwidth downloading large items. We also instituted a continuous watch of usage so that, if needed, more bandwidth could be added. Outside wireless access points like ours are now on the wish lists for most libraries.

Another positive outcome was an increased use of our virtual library. This service was just what was needed for those avid readers who were staying safe at home. Since the library is virtual, it has no limitations as to space. Currently, its collection has over 49,000 ebooks, 13,800 audio books, and 700 videos to lend out. With the library's new online application process, new library members did not have to come in to the library to gain access to the virtual library – ideal service for a pandemic.

Services to the Community

Collection Usage

Each time a book or other library material is checked out, a circulation transaction is created. The total number of circulations is tracked by our automation software. The total number of items circulated from within the physical library was 5,628. This number includes four months of pandemic limitations (February 2020 – June 2020).
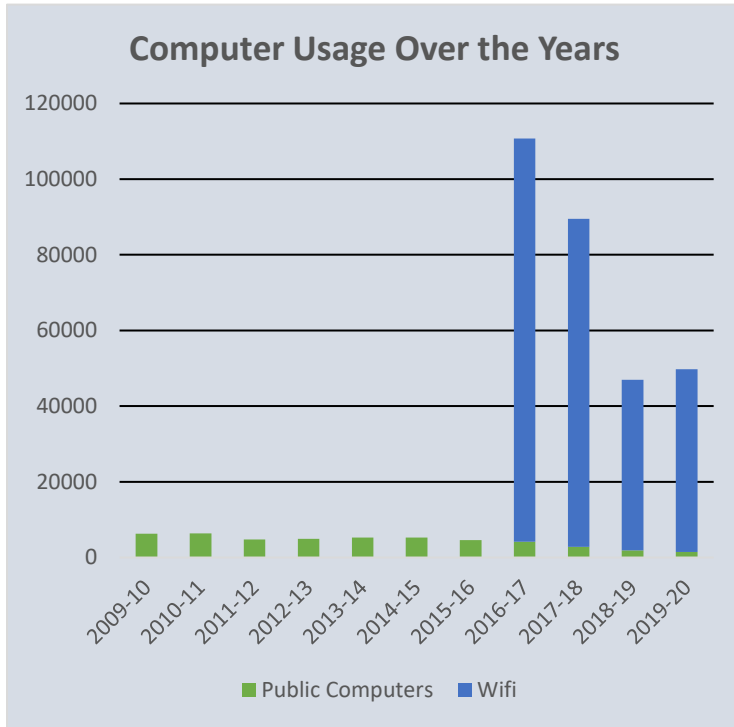
Circulations Over the Years
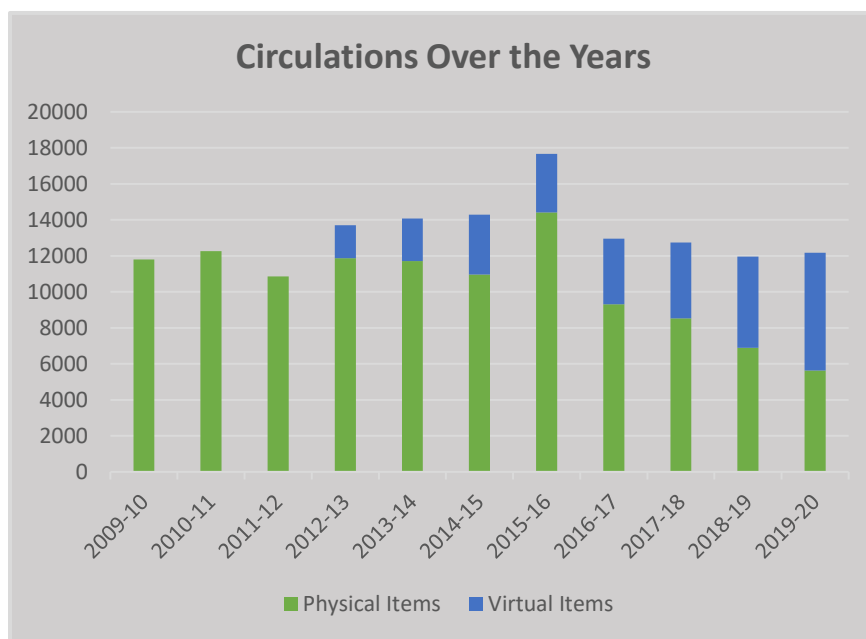
The library continued its participation in the Oklahoma Virtual Library Consortium. Access is handled through Overdrive.com which supports downloads to PCs, Apple computers, Android, IPhones/Pads, and Kindle. This service was a blessing during the closures and stay-at-home orders caused by the pandemic. We had our highest number of checkouts since the service started in 2015. The virtual library added 6,546 circulations to our totals.

Technology Usage

One of the major services of the library is Internet access. 5,239 people took advantage of the library's nine public access computers and two printers. Many used the computers to research and apply for new jobs or to keep in contact with family members. Although use of the public access computers have decreased (largely due to more people having smart phones), it is still a valuable community resource.

Use of computers has decreased, but use of the library's Wi-Fi service has remained a well-used service. If you have ever driven by the library before or after hours, you will usually see someone sitting at one of the outside benches or in their car using a laptop or phone to access the library's Wi-Fi.

Computer Usage Over the Years

(Bar chart showing Public Computers (green) and Wifi (blue) usage from 2009-10 through 2019-20. Y-axis ranges from 0 to 120000. Wifi data begins around 2016-17 with values of approximately 111000 (2016-17), 90000 (2017-18), 47000 (2018-19), and 50000 (2019-20). Public Computers remain low throughout.)

During operating hours, many bring in their own laptops or phones to access the Wi-Fi from our comfortable seating areas inside (limited during COVID-19). We have had Wi-Fi service since 2005, but have not been able to track usage until 2016. Now we are not only able to track numbers of separate sessions, but also the types of devices used, the number of unique users, and many other statistics.

In late 2018, we had to change the Wi-Fi's 24/7 access to a limited access (5 am to midnight) to curb malicious use of the library services and facilities. This seemed to cut down on misuse, while still serving our community well.
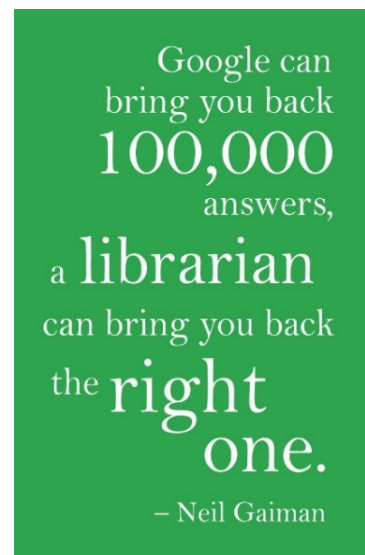
The library's Internet access is carried over a fiber optic cable managed by Bolt Fiber at a contracted speed of 100 Mbps upload and download. The limits have been set at 20 Mbps for each individual user.

Information Services

The library answers numerous reference questions daily. The value of such reference questions is notoriously hard to quantify. A simple school related question might be worth $5; an answer that helps a person start a business might be worth tens of thousands of dollars!

Last year, we estimated that we answered over 1100 reference questions. In truth, that number is a very low estimate – its hard to count how many questions someone asks during a discussion or a help session at the computer.

The library also serves as a source of information for local businesses, community events, and government services. We have

Google can bring you back 100,000 answers, a librarian can bring you back the right one.
– Neil Gaiman

a 12 foot bulletin board filled with resources and notices. We display brochures for local services and common topic phamplets like venomous snakes of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Bar Association's Questions and Answers.

Digitally, we have a Gateway (http://antlers.app5.net/) that has direct links to services like social security and hunting licenses. We have a website (https://www.antlerslibrary.okpls.org/) with information and links to sites on health issues, education, jobs, and business. Through the website, you can connect to statewide databases that can search magazines like Consumer Reports. Our library materials catalog is also online. It is available directly (https://antlers.biblionix.com/catalog/) or through the website.

Programming

Programming remained difficult to schedule in 2019 due to continued lack of attendance even on popular and sought-after topics. But we were successful with a couple of new programs:

MURDER AT THE LIBRARY. The doors were locked, so how did this happen? A body has been found in the community room at the Antlers Public Library. Come with us to investigate - and find out whodunit.

Our first ever CSI Antlers teen program was so much fun! Teens learned about crime scene discovery, analysis, evidence gathering, and notations. Included were lessons on fingerprinting, DNA, and GPS calculations. The class ended with a trip to Judge Wallace's courtroom with the presentation of evidence and prosecution of the guilty. Funds for the class were donated by a PSO grant. Teens wholeheartedly requested a follow-up class with a more difficult crime.

A second new offering was a Grow with Google® class Get Your Business Online hosted by the library and taught by the Choctaw Small Business Development Services. In this half day class, participants were walked through the process of creating a business profile on Google. Verifications were done onsite and other tips for creating a positive Internet presence were given. We were not able to accommodate all those who wanted the training in the first class, but the pandemic interfered with hosting a second class.


Make the first step in helping your business evolve and succeed by claiming your Google business. When your business succeeds, you help the economic growth of all Pushmataha County.

The pandemic not only caused the cancellation of our second Grow with Google class, but to insure public health all programs were cancelled, including our very popular Summer Reading Program. The library board was very excited about this year's theme of Imagine Your Story with programs centered on fairy tales, tall tales, and fables. When we knew the program would be canceled, the library board scurried to come up with something enjoyable for the children. We used the funds set aside for summer reading to purchase activity packs. It was quite a rush to purchase that many items during a time when most stores were closed and many of us were under stay-at-home orders. The library board and staff pitched in to assemble and distribute activities to 550 children receiving lunches from the school.

Cost of Services

Collection
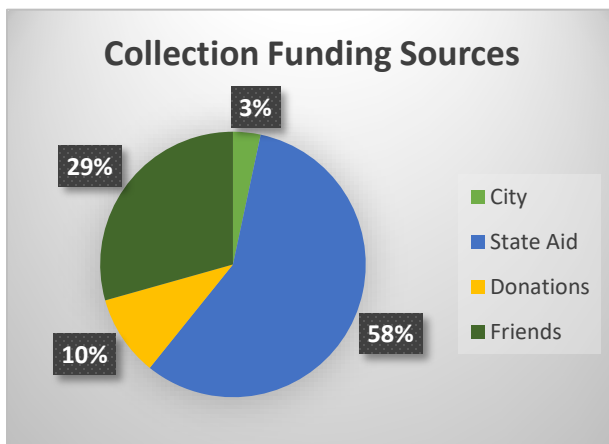
The most expected expenditure for a library is the purchase of items to add to the collection. The library purchased over 300 new books this past year. We were also able to add approximately 250 donated books to the shelves.

A good library is constantly weeding out books that are out-of-date and not checked out. This keeps the library shelves looking fresh and inviting. We recycle the used books in a variety of ways. Discards are placed on our For Sale and free shelves, donated to community shelves and the McLeod prison, or sent to Better World Books. This year, the library discarded 778 old, unused, or damaged items.

Our virtual library membership through the Oklahoma Virtual Library Consortium costs $1500 annually. Half of that fee is for purchasing ebooks to add to the holdings of the Consortium. No library budget funds were available for this service. *All funds used for the Virtual Library were from donations made by the Friends of the Library.*

Library collection expenditures for the year were $5,108 which equals 6% of the library's expenditures for FY19.

Wages

As with most community service organizations, it is the quality of the staff that determines success. Contrary to popular belief, being a librarian is not a simple job of tracking books going in and out. In the 21st century, librarianship is about working with the community, budgeting, designing library spaces, marketing, purchasing, managing computer networks, working with state legislators, advocating, government ERATE administration, website development, grant application/implementation, and developing programming. State-wide, library directors are expected to have a Master's Degree, while other librarians are expected to have at least some college-level education.

This year, the staff consisted of an excellent team of three: Director Patti Lehman, Librarian Kathie O'Keefe, and Clerk Emily Howser. A full team meant that duties were more efficiently distributed between each member. The Clerk was in charge of the library floor. The Librarian oversaw the clerk and was in charge of processing items, technology upkeep, creating procedures, and served as the Membership Chair on the Friends of the Library. The Librarian also collaborated with the Director on programs and social media. The Director was in charge of finances, purchasing, grant applications, reporting, policy, some internal procedures, website maintenance, and collaborating with the Library board.

$54,123 was spent to staff the library with wages and benefits that are a fraction of the southeast Oklahoma averages for these positions. This equals 63% of the library's total spending.

Programs, Computers, Equipment, and Maintenance

The third category of library expenditures includes monies spent to host programs and to maintain the large network of computers and other technical equipment. Also included in this category is the amount for maintenance, utilities, travel, and supplies.

Funding Sources for Internet

17%

83%

■ Federal ■ Ok Univ Serv Fund
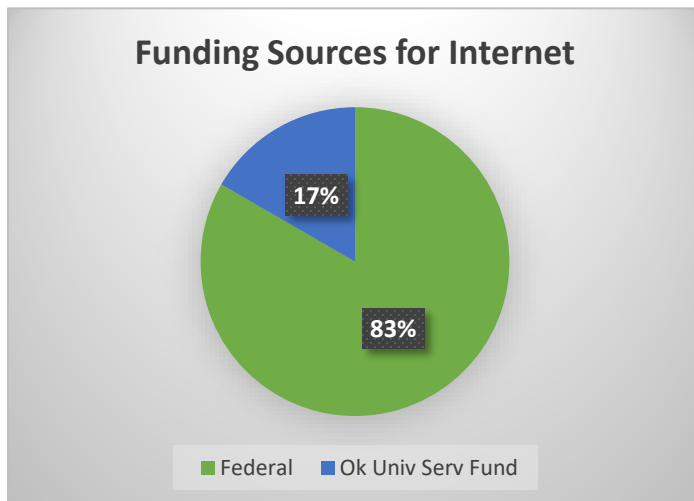
E-Rate is the commonly used name for the Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund, which is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
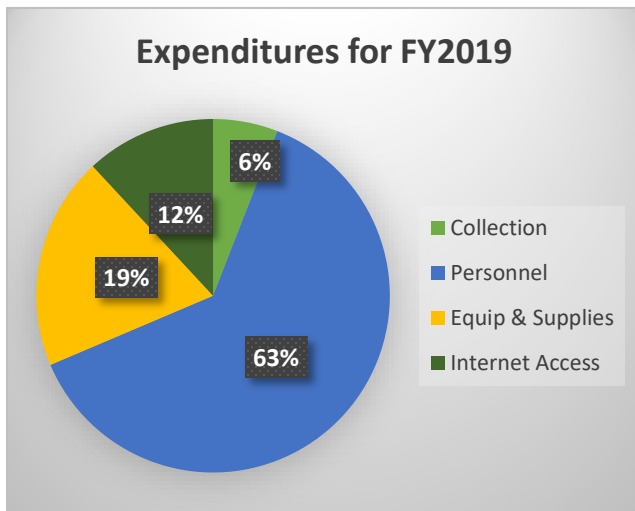
The library's Internet access is funded by E-Rate and by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (through the Oklahoma Universal Service Fund). These costs are a substantial amount of the Federal government support of libraries. The State of Oklahoma subsidizes ERATE funding and also provides State Aid to Libraries.

Even though no funds for Internet access come through the library's budget but are paid directly to the provider by the government, they are reported in the total expenditures of the library. This year's expenditures were $16,820 for programs, equipment, supplies, and building maintenance, plus $10,290 for Internet access. Funding sources of the $16,820 came from a variety of sources and make up 19% of the library's total expenditures. Securing Internet access is equal to 12% of the library's total expenditures.

Programs, Furniture, Equipment, & Supplies Funding Sources

City 42%
State Aid 50%
Donations 8%
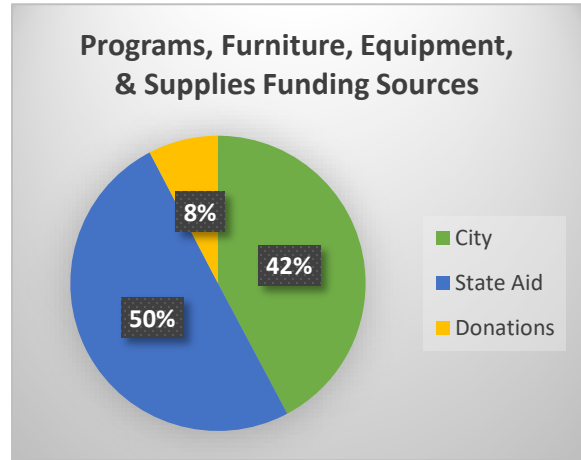
Funding Year 19 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) Overview

Expenditures for FY2019

Collection 6%
Personnel 63%
Equip & Supplies 19%
Internet Access 12%

✓ Collection Expenditures: $5108
✓ Program, Supplies, & Other: $16,820
✓ Internet Access: $10,290
✓ Staff expenditures: $54,123

Total library expenditures were $86,341.

The library expenditures were made possible by
✓ $56,900 from the City of Antlers.
✓ $16,020 from the State of Oklahoma.
✓ $8,575 from Federal programs.
✓ $4,846 from donations.

Funding Sources for FY2019

Federal 10%
State 18%
City 66%
Donations 6%