

GRAND RAPIDS AREA LIBRARY



**GRAND
RAPIDS**
AREALIBRARY

**CITY GOVERNMENT
ACADEMY**

Fill-in the Blank

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GRAL AT A GLANCE

- Grand Rapids Area Library (GRAL) is a free community resource supported by local property taxes since 1895.
- GRAL is a 26,500 square foot building, holding more than 65,000 items for checkout. The building was completed in 2000.
- Member of the Arrowhead Library System.
- GRAL is the busiest library in NE Minnesota outside of Duluth.
- There are six libraries in Itasca County, with 75% of library transactions in Itasca County occurring at GRAL (through 2025).

SERVICE AREA

The Library serves the following cities and townships:

- Arbo
- Blackberry
- Cohasset
- Feeley
- **Grand Rapids**
- Harris
- LaPrairie
- Sago
- Spang
- Wabana
- Warba

Service Area Population: 21,102

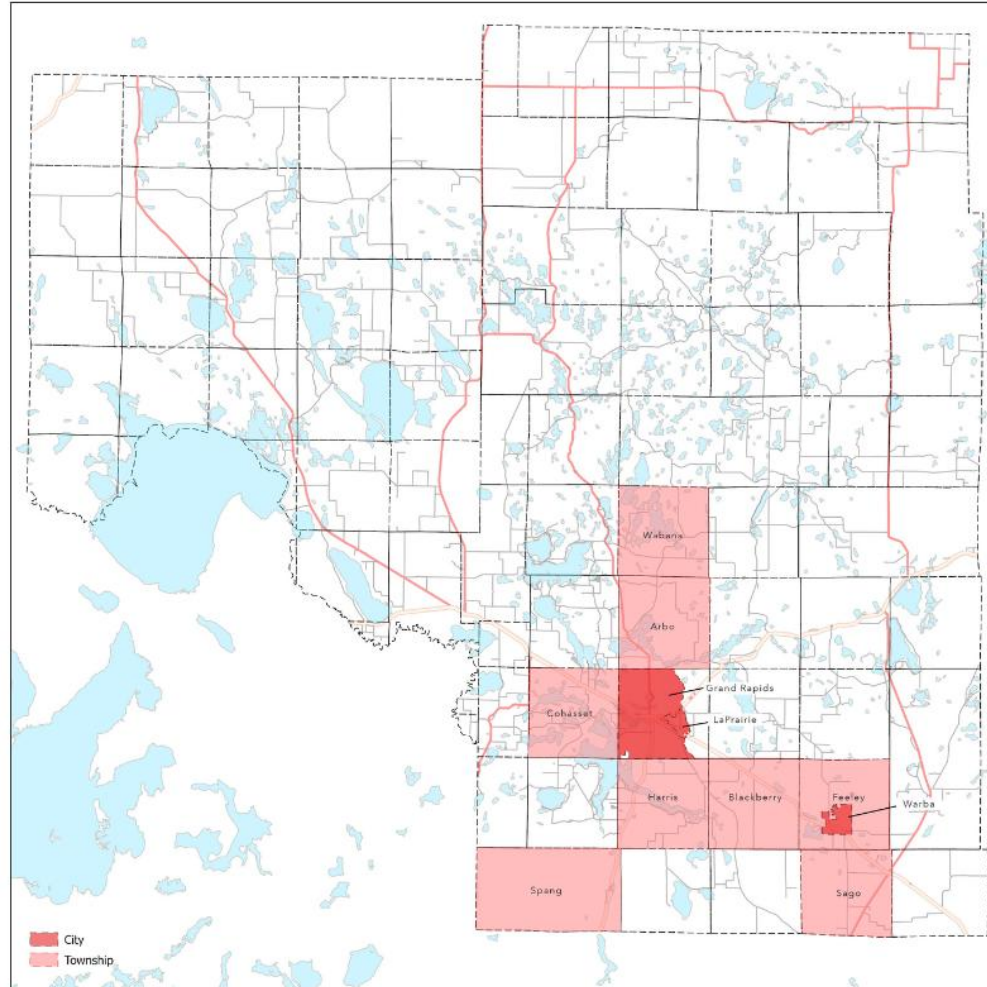
Library Cardholders: 9,756

Door Count: 60,701

Materials Circulation (2025): 167,191 items
[~25% are downloadable items]

Passports accepted (2025): 1,223

Public computer use sessions (2025): 3,603



GOVERNANCE



HOW DO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OPERATE A LIBRARY?

134.09 LIBRARY BOARDS.

SUBDIVISION 1. APPOINTMENT.

The mayor of the city with the approval of the council for a city library or the board of commissioners for a county library, shall appoint a board of five, seven, or nine members from among the residents of the city or county.

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF A LIBRARY BOARD?

134.11 ORGANIZATION OF BOARD; DUTIES.

SUBDIVISION 1. ORGANIZATION.

Immediately after appointment, the library board shall organize by electing one of its number as president and one as secretary, and from time to time it may appoint such other officers as it deems necessary.

SUBDIVISION 2. DUTIES.

It shall have exclusive control of the expenditure of all money collected for or placed to the credit of the library fund, of interest earned on all money collected for or placed to the credit of the library fund, of the construction of library buildings, and of the grounds, rooms, and buildings provided for library purposes. All money received for the library shall be paid into the city or county treasury, credited to the library fund, kept separate from other money of the city or county, and paid out only upon approval by the board.

GOVERNANCE



DEFINITION OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE:

MS 134.001 SUBDIVISION 2. PUBLIC LIBRARY.

"Public library" means any library that provides free access to all residents of a city or county without discrimination.

HOW IS A LIBRARY FUNDED?

134.07 PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE.

The governing body of any city or county may establish and maintain [through collection of tax dollars] public library service for the use of its inhabitants.

275.761 MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT REQUIREMENTS REDUCED.

*(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary and except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c), the amounts required to be expended under the maintenance of effort requirements for **counties** under sections 134.34, 245.4835, 256F.10, and 256F.13, **are reduced to 90 percent of the amounts required for 2011.***

(b) This section does not permit a county to reduce compliance with maintenance of effort requirements to the extent that the reduction would:

- (1) require the state to expend additional money or incur additional costs; or*
- (2) cause a reduction in the receipt by the state or the county of federal funds.*

(c) The commissioner of management and budget may determine the maintenance of effort requirements that are not permitted, in whole or in part, to be reduced under paragraph (b). The commissioner shall publish these determinations on the department's website and no county may reduce compliance with a maintenance of effort requirement that the commissioner determines is not subject to reduction.

*(d) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the amounts required to be expended under the maintenance of effort requirements for all statutory and home rule charter **cities** under section 134.34 **are reduced to 90 percent of the amounts required for 2011.***

GOVERNANCE

WHAT ARE THE STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

134.13 ANNUAL REPORT.

As soon as practicable following the end of the fiscal year the library board shall report to the governing body of the city or county all amounts received during the preceding year and the sources thereof, the amounts expended and for what purposes, the number of library materials on hand, the number purchased and loaned, and such other information as it deems advisable. No later than April 1 of each year the library board shall file this information with the Department of Education on forms supplied by the department.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

13.40 LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL DATA.

SUBDIVISION 2. PRIVATE DATA; LIBRARY BORROWERS.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), the following data maintained by a library are private data on individuals and may not be disclosed for other than library purposes except pursuant to a court order:

- (1) data that link a library patron's name with materials requested or borrowed by the patron or that link a patron's name with a specific subject about which the patron has requested information or materials; or*
- (2) data in applications for borrower cards, other than the name of the borrower.*

(b) A library may release reserved materials to a family member or other person who resides with a library patron and who is picking up the material on behalf of the patron. A patron may request that reserved materials be released only to the patron.

SERVICES

Collections & Community Spaces

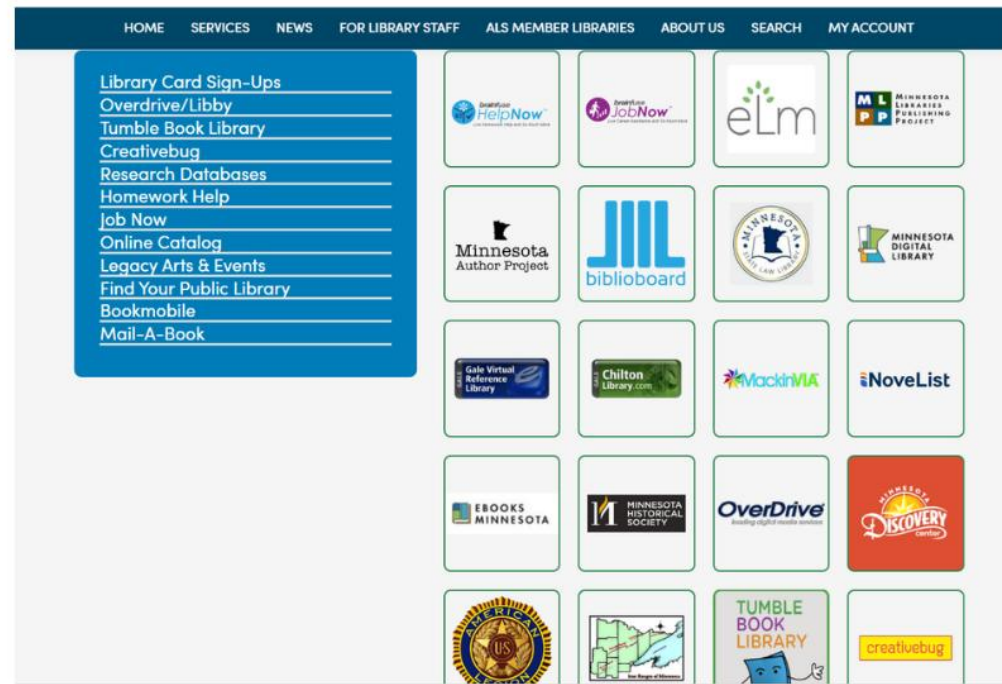
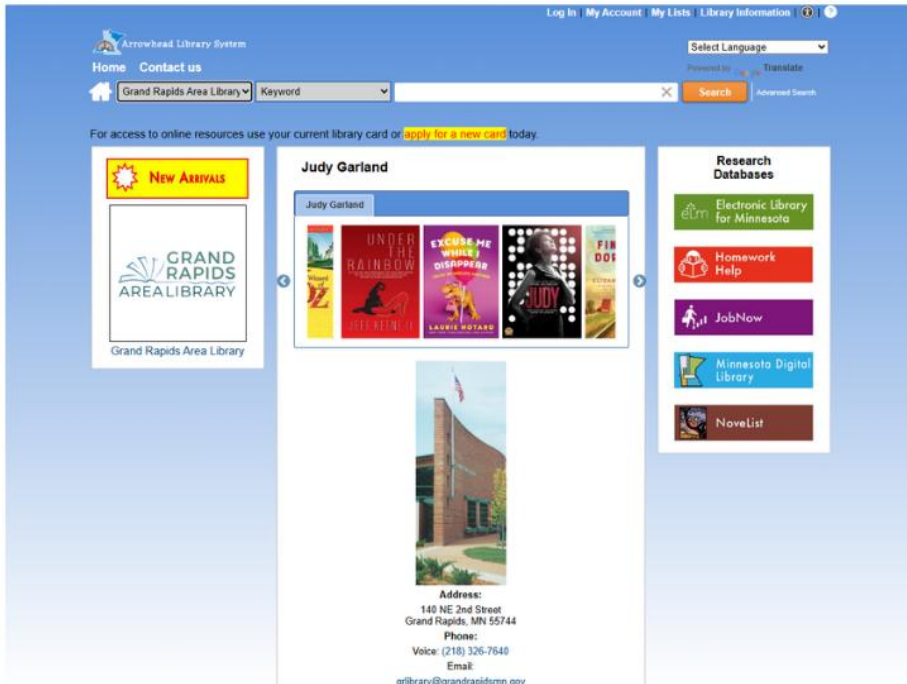
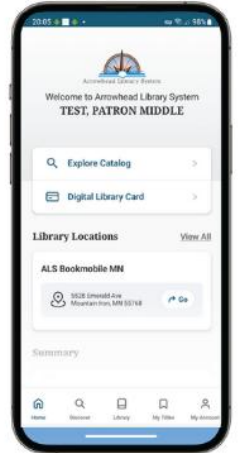


SERVICES

Online Tools:

Available 24/7/365 with a library card:

- Online Catalog at alslib.info
- Libby electronic books, audiobooks, and magazines (25% of checkouts are electronic materials)
- Electronic databases
- ALS App



SERVICES

Active Social Media (@grandrapidsarealibrary):

- Previously posted episodes of **Online Storytime** available on YouTube and Facebook
- New and previously posted episodes of **Artastic at Home** available on YouTube and Facebook
- Daily/weekly posts on Instagram and Facebook keep the public informed and engaged



SERVICES: BEYOND BOOKS

How does the Library support the community, beyond lending books?

Open & Welcoming Environment for All:

- Free parking
- Public telephone
- Public restrooms
- ADA accessible building
- Device charging station
- Water bottle refill station
- Community information resource
- “Dry” space
- Polling place for local voting
- Children’s play space
- Teen space
- Quiet study rooms
- Meeting rooms
- Library Lawn:
 - StoryWalk
 - Music park
 - Picnic tables
 - Lounge seating
 - Fishing pier
- Safe space for individuals experiencing homelessness
- Vulnerable adults and children and their caregivers
- Tourists visiting
- Low-cost Used Book Store
- Community bulletin board

Public Meeting Space:

- Supervised family visits
- Attorney/client meeting
- Probation officer/client meeting
- Other City, County, and State official/client meetings
- Tutoring
- Recovery groups
- Support group meetings
- Teen group homes
- Book club meetings
- Young/teen parent group meetings

Business/Personal:

- Small business operations/meetings
- **Passport processing**
- Resource support for those recently incarcerated (sent via Itasca County Sheriff’s Office)

Volunteerism:

- RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)
- Community service completion
- Job readiness placement
- Students
- Passionate patrons

Programming & Education:

- In-person programming for children, teen, and adults
- Online programming for children
- Literacy programs for all ages (annual summer and winter reading, etc.)
- Free community events (Summer Celebration and more)
- Public and private school field trips
- Resource and curriculum support for homeschool families
- **Test proctoring**

Technology Services:

- Free/open WiFi
- Free computer use
- Faxing
- Copying
- Printing support
- Microfilm machine
- Light tech support

Library of Things/Items Other Than Books:

- Cake pans
- Educational Kits for children
- Memory Kits for adults
- Lawn games
- Art kits
- Bike locks
- Kilowatt meters
- CD player
- DVDs
- Games
- Fishing poles
- PFDs
- Ukuleles
- Pedometers
- Paper shredder
- Puzzles
- Exercise bike with reading platform
- Free access to newspapers and magazines
- Travel guides and maps

#gralbeyondbooks



SERVICES: BEYOND BOOKS

Our wide reach meets community needs with unique in-person and online programs - and much more.

ANNUAL
PUZZLE
PALOOZA

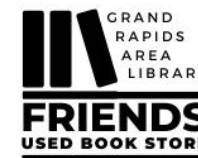


Online Storytime!

LEGO
CLUB



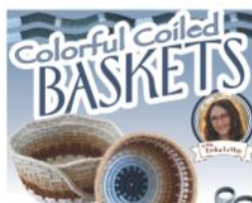
TEEN
TUESDAY



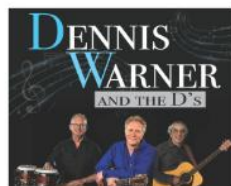
Explore & Create
with Ms. Diana



Teen Book
Club



bell museum
After School
STEAM

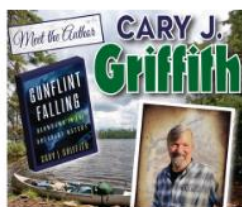


Page Turners
Book Club



ARTASTIC
AT HOME!
WITH GRANDMA NANCY

Spring Fever
Pop-Up
Book Sale



THE MACROSTIE
ART FILES



Exploring the
Superior National
Forest

BRRRING ON
THE BOOKS!



#gralbeyondbooks



SERVICES: BEYOND BOOKS

2025 Children's programs promoting literacy, education, and entertainment:

- In person programs: 49
- In person program attendance: 1,493
- Summer Celebration attendance: 537 people
- Summer Reading participation: 1,391
- Winter Reading participation: 471
- Artastic at Home kits distributed: 1,050

Online Storytime viewership:

2024:

- 52 episodes
- 26,909 views

2025: *Through September*

- 41 episodes
- 14,645 views

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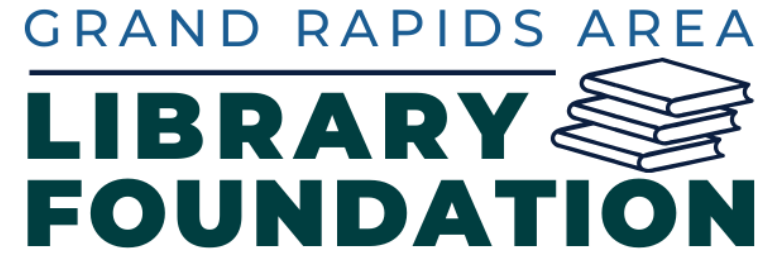
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- As an ALS member library, GRAL patrons have access to:
 - Inter-library loan
 - Mail-a-Book
 - Bookmobile
- \$50,000 in-kind IT support
 - Online catalog
 - Research databases
 - Libby collection
- Monthly take-and-create programming
- Quality in-person programming and promotions, funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (Legacy).



Arrowhead Library System

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



VOLUNTEERISM IN 2025



Month	Regular Volunteers		RSVP Volunteers		Library Board		Library Friends		Library Foundation		Total	
	# Vol	Hours	# Vol	Hours	# Vol	Hours	# Vol	Hours	# Vol	Hours	# Vol	Hours
January	27	160.75	3	90.5	7	27	9	85.75	2	5	30	251.25
February	36	157.5	4	57.25	8	28	8	56.25	10	14	40	214.75
March	30	167.75	4	70	8	28	9	70.5	1	3	34	237.75
April	27	149	4	65.25	8	28	6	52	1	3	31	214.25
May	35	163.25	4	94	9	29	8	89.75	8	12	39	257.25
June	32	174.25	5	96.75	8	28	8	98.5	1	4	37	271
July	42	221.5	7	129.25	7	27	19	131.5	1	4	49	350.75
August	48	234	5	59	8	46	6	58.5	2	6	53	293
September	43	188.75	5	64.25	7	27	9	71	9	12.5	48	253
October	33	160.5	4	53.75	7	27	10	76.25	1	2.5	37	214.25
November	37	165.5	4	85.75	7	27	9	94	8	15	41	251.25
December	30	136.75	4	65.25	6	16	8	63	1	6	34	202
Total		2079.5		931		338		947		87	90	3,010.50

2026 OPERATIONS

Why are we open Monday-Wednesday, 10:30am-5:30pm?

Operational support from Arrowhead Library System through courier and IT services is available on **weekdays**. This is how interlibrary loan is possible.

Necessary City of Grand Rapids IT, Buildings & Maintenance, and Public Works support services are available on **weekdays**.

This schedule offers both **morning** and **early evening** hours to accommodate our youngest patrons, caregivers, working patrons, and students who visit **after school**.

Important social services through other local agencies (open/available on **weekdays**) occur here.

Patrons requiring the greatest in-person support visit us on **Mondays**.

Mondays already have the greatest number of returned books and require the most staff and volunteer support to check in and shelve.

Weekday hours allow us to maintain some programs such as kids and teens book clubs, in-person storytime, and support for homeschool families. Additionally, we can provide service on early school release days (**Wednesdays**) for local kids and families.

Looking forward

1 **Maintaining service levels**

A loss of funding hinders our ability to provide programs, services, and access for the community.

2 **Finding a long-term funding solution**

Without cooperative funding from Itasca County and/or significant library legislation changes at the state level, it will be difficult to return to previous staffing and service levels.

3 **Building maintenance**

- Phase I of the Façade Maintenance & Repair plan was completed in late fall 2023.
- Phase II includes necessary - and costly - roof replacement

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QUESTIONS?