

AMERICA'S STAR LIBRARIES

THE *LJ* INDEX OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE 2022

By Keith Curry Lance

This is the 15th year in which *Library Journal* has scored U.S. public libraries on the *LJ* Index of Public Library Service and awarded Star Library ratings. The 2022 scores and ratings are based on FY20 data from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Public Library Survey (PLS).

Every year, *Star Libraries* changes. The numbers of libraries reporting and qualifying for Star Libraries changes. The summary indicators for each expenditure category—the drivers of the index calculations—change. And the level of service output of each library changes, both in relation to past performance and compared to the performance of other libraries. The year 2020, however, brought unprecedented change.

U.S. public libraries were affected dramatically by COVID shutdowns and restrictions. Obviously, that impacts the statistics they report, on which the *LJ* Index is based. Moreover, those statistics were impacted unevenly from library to library and state to state. In part, that's because some places were harder hit by the pandemic, and/or implemented more aggressive restrictions to contain the spread. However, there's also a major difference in reported statistics driven by the fact that not all states report on the same fiscal year schedule. A library whose fiscal year includes only a few months of COVID impact is going to look very different than one whose year includes mostly pandemic months. And the changes libraries made in response to COVID challenges also changed how they delivered, measured, and reported the outputs used to calculate their Index scores.

NEW SERVICES, OLD QUESTIONS

While the statistical definitions of the eight service outputs used to calculate *LJ* Index scores were unchanged, the circumstances in which they occurred changed radically for

some libraries. How libraries chose to report their adapted service transactions impacts their scores.

Some libraries extended physical loan periods indefinitely. How did that affect circulation statistics? IMLS directs libraries to count renewals as new circulation transactions. Many libraries renew circulation transactions automatically. A library that renewed such extended loans automatically until it reopened would see its circulation figure impacted less severely than the same statistic for a library that did not renew loans automatically.

If a library was providing curbside service, was a pickup counted as a library visit?

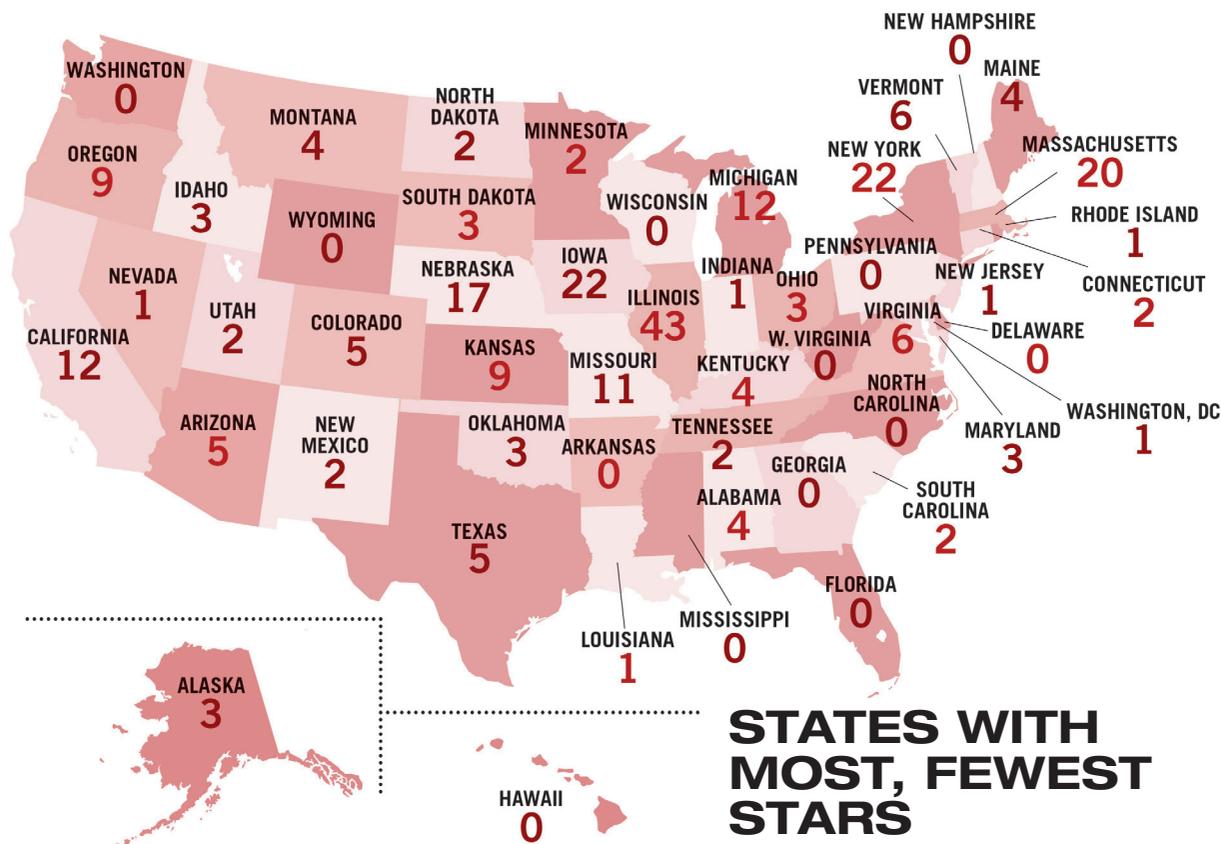
Did public libraries that pivoted to virtual programs count their viewership as program attendance, as website visits, both, or neither? Libraries that were unable to produce virtual programs, or that were serving populations with less digital access, will see their program attendance numbers more impacted.

In addition, public libraries that extended the reach of their Wi-Fi into parking lots and established additional hotspots in community locations would have had more Wi-Fi sessions to report than those that could not extend their Wi-Fi coverage beyond the building.

WHO QUALIFIED

For 2022—based on 2020 data—5,359 public libraries received *LJ* Index scores, and 258 received Stars. That is the lowest number of libraries scored ever; little surprise, given

KEITH CURRY LANCE (KEITHLANC@COMCAST.NET) IS AN INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT BASED IN BOULDER, CO. HE ALSO CONSULTS WITH THE LOUISVILLE, CO-BASED RSL RESEARCH GROUP. IN BOTH CAPACITIES, HE CONDUCTS RESEARCH ON LIBRARIES OF ALL TYPES FOR FEDERAL AND STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES, STATE LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS, AND OTHER LIBRARY-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISITKEITHCURRYLANC.COM.



STATES WITH MOST, FEWEST STARS

The 258 Star libraries

for 2022 are located in 36 states and—for the first time since 2018—the District of Columbia.

Regionally, the Midwest has the largest number of Star Libraries at 125, followed by the Northeast at 56, and the West and the South at 46 and

31, respectively. The Midwest's large number of Star Libraries is accounted for largely by Illinois with 43, Iowa with 22, Nebraska with 17, and Missouri with 11—the remaining states being in single digits. With 22 and 20 Star Libraries respectively, New York and Massachusetts account for the lion's share of Star

Libraries in the Northeast. The West's Star Libraries are found mostly in 4 states: California with 12, Oregon with nine, and Arizona and Colorado with five each. In the South, Virginia has the most Star Libraries with six, followed closely by Texas with five, and Alabama and Kentucky with four each.

the addition of new service outputs to the *LJ* Index in recent years and the pandemic's impact on item response rates. For the first time ever, this year's 140 new or returning Star Libraries outnumbered the 118 repeat Star Libraries. (See Table 2.) Two factors seem to explain this unprecedented turnover. First, the varying reporting periods from state to state. Of calendar 2020's 10 months impacted by COVID (March to December), some libraries were affected for only four months during their reporting period (those reporting for July 2019 to June 2020), others for seven months (those reporting for October 2019 to September 2020), and yet others for 10 months (those reporting for January to December 2020).

Second, item non-response—libraries declining or being unable to report specific data points—meant that many libraries that routinely received *LJ* Index scores and often received Star Library status in the past received neither in this round.

As usual in recent years, each library's index score and its component statistics were subjected to an outlier test. If any of the statistics was three or more standard deviations from the mean for its spending category and accounted for 50

percent or more of the library's overall raw score, that library was disqualified, to prevent a single extreme statistic from giving a library Star status. For the 2022 round, 283 public libraries did not pass the outlier test. That is up slightly from the 2021 round. This is likely explained by this year's addition of library website visits to the *LJ* Index or by extremely atypical figures for other index statistics. The "Find Your Library" file at libraryjournal.com includes a tab for these libraries, reporting their *LJ* Index scores and indicating which of their statistics did not pass the outlier test.

WHAT'S IN A YEAR?

As outlined above, the single issue most affecting the Star Library ratings this round is the reporting period of the state or library. Because IMLS collects data via independent surveys conducted by 50 state library agencies and systems in DC and other territories, there is considerable variety in the 12-month period for which libraries report. In ordinary times, one 12-month period is as good as another. Between March and December 2020, however, times were anything but ordinary. (See Table 3.)

TABLE 1 MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS (SD) OF LJ INDEX STATISTICS BY EXPENDITURE CATEGORY, 2022 (BASED ON FY20 DATA)

PER CAPITA SERVICE OUTPUT EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	PHYSICAL CIRCULATION		CIRCULATION OF ELECTRONIC MATERIALS		LIBRARY VISITS		PROGRAM ATTENDANCE		TOTAL INTERNET COMPUTER USE		PUBLIC WI-FI SESSIONS		ELECTRONIC RETRIEVALS		LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
\$30M+	4.48	3.19	2.24	1.51	2.27	1.07	0.20	0.14	0.39	0.23	1.40	3.13	3.93	13.81	5.13	4.16
\$10-29.9M	6.09	4.96	1.90	1.20	2.95	2.11	0.30	0.30	0.54	0.57	1.65	3.01	1.63	2.13	5.39	6.09
\$5-9.9M	5.98	4.88	1.62	1.28	3.34	2.62	0.39	0.39	0.52	0.66	2.43	8.70	3.36	8.38	5.92	12.71
\$1-4.9M	5.24	4.32	1.39	1.97	3.50	3.24	0.46	0.69	0.47	0.55	1.87	13.99	4.03	30.88	6.01	28.31
\$400-999.9K	4.49	3.68	1.21	2.38	3.46	3.68	0.57	2.46	0.47	0.73	1.27	3.28	12.97	230.80	3.61	14.01
\$200-399.9K	3.96	3.40	1.02	2.75	3.15	3.65	0.45	0.90	0.44	0.52	1.15	5.13	11.03	107.92	2.65	9.80
\$100-199.9K	4.22	3.88	0.98	2.01	3.09	2.97	0.49	0.83	0.55	1.03	1.04	2.24	2.23	37.08	4.11	25.97
\$50-99.9K	3.77	3.06	1.72	17.52	2.71	2.62	0.41	0.74	0.49	0.68	1.52	13.90	1.50	18.00	3.10	16.15
\$10-49.9K	2.51	2.61	0.61	2.62	1.68	1.52	0.26	0.52	0.39	0.57	1.21	5.19	0.11	0.62	1.35	3.22
TOTAL	4.38	3.84	1.24	6.52	3.11	3.18	0.46	1.29	0.48	0.70	1.42	8.83	5.98	114.26	3.96	19.38

See **About Electronic Retrievals Data** (libraryjournal.com/StarLibraries) for important background information about extraordinary outlier data.

KEY: M-Millions K-Thousands

Twenty-two states—the largest group—reported data for July 2019 through June 2020. Data for those states were only affected for four months. Five states reported data for October 2019 through September 2020. Data for those states were affected for seven months. Some 13 states reported data for the 2020 calendar year, meaning that their data were affected for 10 months. And 11 states either reported for fiscal years beginning earlier than July 2019 or allowed individual public libraries to choose their own 12-month period on which to report.

The impact of these different reporting periods on this year’s Star Libraries is not surprising, given the extraordinary conditions facing public libraries during the first months of the pandemic. Comparing this round of Star Libraries with last year’s provides clear indications of the pandemic’s impact. (See Tables 3 and 4.) In 2021, libraries reporting for July 2018 to June 2019 accounted for over a third (36.3 per-

cent) of Star Libraries; this year, those libraries reporting for July 2019 to June 2020 accounted for more than half (53.9 percent). Conversely, in 2021, libraries reporting for calendar 2019 accounted for more than two out of five (44.9 percent) Star Libraries, while this year, reporting for calendar 2020, they accounted for only one out of six Star Libraries.

MISSING ANSWERS

There are two kinds of missing data that prevent libraries from being considered for the *LJ* Index: libraries that don’t respond to their state library agency’s annual survey at all, and libraries that don’t answer all of the particular questions that the Index is based on. Comparisons of 2019 and 2020 data show that there was no dramatic increase in libraries not answering the survey at all associated with the pandemic.

However, there were several states where not answering a specific question was a significant problem. While

TABLE 2 PUBLIC LIBRARIES ELIGIBLE FOR THE LJ INDEX AND REPEAT AND NEW STAR LIBRARIES, 2009-2022 (BASED ON FY06-20 IMLS DATA)

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	NUMBER OF LIBRARIES															
	DEC 2022 (2020 DATA)	DEC 2021 (2019 DATA)	DEC 2020 (2018 DATA)	DEC 2019 (2017 DATA)	NOV 2018 (2016 DATA)	DEC 2017 (2015 DATA)	NOV 2016 (2014 DATA)	NOV 2015 (2013 DATA)	NOV 2014 (2012 DATA)	NOV 2013 (2011 DATA)	NOV 2012 (2010 DATA)	NOV 2011 (2009 DATA)	OCT 2010 (2008 DATA)	NOV 2009 (2007 DATA)	FEB 2009 (2006 DATA)	
\$30M +	60	65	58	55	54	49	49	51	47	46	44	48	45	36	31	
\$10M-\$29.9M	114	104	104	112	127	116	107	112	113	112	114	107	106	98	88	
\$5M-\$9.9M	202	208	173	192	220	219	222	209	209	198	191	211	186	176	159	
\$1M-\$4.9M	1,142	1,211	1,132	1,251	1,445	1,436	1,401	1,397	1,381	1,367	1,349	1,307	1,282	1,209	1,125	
\$400-\$999.9K	1,079	1,180	1,113	1,221	1,451	1,443	1,414	1,446	1,394	1,395	1,373	1,377	1,333	1,278	1,247	
\$200K-\$399.9K	851	958	915	1,030	1,169	1,186	1,171	1,209	1,208	1,174	1,170	1,129	1,087	1,113	1,089	
\$100K-\$199.9K	860	935	920	1,044	1,204	1,212	1,180	1,257	1,237	1,251	1,258	1,236	1,204	1,191	1,173	
\$50-\$99.9K	663	725	756	888	1,011	1,002	1,055	1,088	1,122	1,111	1,126	1,145	1,128	1,152	1,115	
\$10K-\$49.9K	388	460	437	540	680	746	750	894	875	919	945	953	1,036	1,015	1,088	
Total Libraries Rated	5,359	5,846	5,608	6,333	7,361	7,409	7,349	7,663	7,586	7,573	7,570	7,513	7,407	7,268	7,115	
Repeat Stars (from prior year)	118	178	147	172	197	205	199	207	198	196	203	195	195	208		
New Stars (no stars prior year)	140	78	115	89	60	54	61	54	60	67	59	67	63	50		
TOTAL STARS	258	256	262	261	257	259	260	261	258	263	262	262	258	258		

KEY: M-Millions K-Thousands

the vast majority of states are at or near 100 percent reporting of the *LJ* Index's four original variables—print circulation, library visits, program attendance, and public internet computer use—that is not the case for the newer four measures. Reporting of circulation of electronic materials is similarly high for all but three states, but the three newest statistics in the *LJ* Index—Wi-Fi sessions, electronic retrievals (database use), and, this year's addition, library website visits—are problematic for several states. Twelve states have response rates below 90 percent for electronic retrievals; 21 have comparably low response rates for Wi-Fi sessions, and 33 states have similarly low response rates for website visits. Because to receive an *LJ* Index score a library must report all of the data required to calculate it, those states tend to be underrepresented among this year's Star Libraries.

Ohio is particularly noteworthy in the 2022 cycle, given its long history of large numbers of Star Libraries. For the 2020 data year, three out of four Ohio public libraries (74.9 percent) did not report library visits. That is more than three times as high as the state with the next highest level of missing visits data (Wisconsin, 22.9 percent). Nationwide, only 6.1 percent of libraries meeting the basic *LJ* Index qualifications declined to report library visits. *LJ* contacted the State Library of Ohio to ask why this occurred, and State Data Coordinator Kirsten Krumsee explained, "Most Ohio public libraries calculate annual visits based on a 'typical week.' Due to there being no typical week in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we asked that libraries input 'not available.'" (Nationally, just over 30 percent of all responding public libraries indicated that their figures for library visits were based on "typical week" extrapolations.) Because so many Ohio libraries did not answer that question this year, many of those libraries that have been Star Libraries over the preceding 14 years were not eligible this year. In 2021, Ohio had 26 Star Libraries; in 2022, it has three. This opening up of almost two dozen Star Library slots created an opportunity for other libraries to achieve Star status for the first time.

OVERALL SERVICE LEVELS FELL

Another factor affecting the 2022 Star Libraries is the level of service outputs generated by all public libraries, as well as individual ones. (See Table 5.) It is little surprise that, nationwide, most 2020 service output totals were down compared to 2019. Predictably, the one service output that increased from 2019

TABLE 3 STATES BY REPORTING PERIOD IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SURVEY DATA FILE, 2020

REPORTING PERIOD	STATES
Jul 2019–Jun 2020	AZ CA CT DE GA HI IA KY MD MA MT NC NM NV OK OR RI SC TN VA WV WY (N = 22)
Oct 2019–Sept 2020	AL DC FL ID MS (N = 5)
Jan–Dec 2020	AR CO IN KS LA MN ND NJ OH PA SD WA WI (N = 13)
Other	AK IL ME MI MO NE NH NY TX UT VT (N = 11)

TABLE 4 STAR LIBRARIES BY LIBRARY REPORTING SCHEDULE, 2021 & 2022

REPORTING PERIOD	2021 (2019 DATA)		2022 (2020 DATA)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
July–June	93	36.3%	139	53.9%
Oct–Sept	29	11.3%	26	10.1%
Jan–Dec	115	44.9%	42	16.3%
Other*	19	7.4%	51	19.8%
TOTAL	256	100.0%	258	100.0%

*Many of these states permitted libraries to select their own 12-month reporting period within a year and a half period.

West Bloomfield Township Public Library (\$1–4.9M), Illinois's Des Plaines Public Library (\$5–9.9M), Colorado's Dolores County School/Public Library (Dove Creek, \$100–199.9K), and Iowa's Maxwell Public Library (\$10–49.9K).

Eleven libraries moved from four to five stars. Among libraries spending \$30 million or more, these include San Francisco Public Library and Missouri's Saint Louis County Public Library. Among libraries spending \$10 to 29.9 million, these include South Carolina's Charleston County Public Library System and Virginia's Henrico County Public Library. Among libraries spending \$1 to 4.9 million, these include New York's Westhampton Free Library and Jericho Public Library. Among libraries spending \$400,000 to \$999,999, these include Alaska's Homer Public Library and Snow Public Library in Orleans, MA. Alpine County Library/Archives, CA, is the only library spending \$200,000 to \$399,999 to move from four to five stars. Among libraries spending \$10,000 to \$49,999, Iowa's Garnavillo Public Li-

to 2020 was circulation of electronic materials. It is also noteworthy that library website visits—added to the *LJ* Index for the first time this round—declined by 21 percent, even though more libraries reported website visits for 2020 than 2019. This may be because patron interaction with library websites frequently happens during library visits, using library computers—and those two statistics declined the most. Of the six outputs that declined, the drop in library website visits was the smallest.

GAINED STARS

From 2020 to 2021, 27 U.S. public libraries improved their Star Library ratings while remaining in the same spending categories.

Nationwide, six public libraries moved from three to five stars: Oregon's Multnomah County Library (\$30M+), Michigan's Kent District Library (\$10–29.9M) and

TABLE 5 TOTAL SERVICE OUTPUTS OF ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES RESPONDING TO THE IMLS PUBLIC LIBRARY SURVEY, 2019 & 2020*

TOTAL SERVICE OUTPUT	2019		2020		DIFFERENCE	
	NUMBER	REPORTING	NUMBER	REPORTING	NUMBER	PERCENT
Circulation of Electronic Materials	347,699,311	9,240	427,811,183	9,203	80,111,872	23%
Electronic Retrievables	750,284,452	9,240	872,353,149	9,199	122,068,697	16%
Library Website Visits	1,464,771,712	6,723	1,159,024,406	7,100	-305,747,306	-21%
Wi-Fi Sessions	499,311,776	9,240	354,074,462	9,193	-145,237,314	-29%
Physical Circulation	1,838,526,771	9,241	1,212,608,801	9,205	-625,917,970	-34%
Total Program Attendance	125,575,325	9,241	80,169,175	9,207	-45,406,150	-36%
Library Visits	1,254,323,453	9,240	732,462,202	9,203	-521,861,251	-42%
Public Internet Computer Use	224,377,309	9,240	122,195,333	9,202	-102,181,976	-46%

* The 2021 edition of Star Libraries was based on 2019 data, and this 2022 edition was based on 2020 data. These figures include all public libraries, not just those scored on this year's *LJ* index.

See [About Electronic Retrievables Data](https://www.libraryjournal.com/StarLibraries) ([libraryjournal.com/StarLibraries](https://www.libraryjournal.com/StarLibraries)) for important background information about extraordinary outlier data.

brary and Tennessee’s Tellico Plains Public Library moved from four to five stars.

Ten libraries moved from three to four stars. Louisiana’s East Baton Rouge Parish Library is the only library spending \$30 million or more in this group. Libraries spending \$5 to 9.9 million in this group include California’s Newport Beach Public Library and Illinois’s Champaign Public Library and Vernon Area Public Library District. Libraries spending \$1 to 4.9 million in this group include: Harrison Memorial Library in Carmel, CA, New York’s Bronxville Public Library, and Utah’s Park City Library. The three remaining libraries moving from three to four stars are the public libraries in Norwich, VT (\$200–399.9K), Britton, SD (\$100–199.9K), and Olin, IA (\$10–49.9K).

SAME, FEWER & LOST STARS

In addition to the 27 public libraries that gained stars in 2022, 57 libraries retained the same number of stars for 2021 and 2022, and 29 libraries received fewer 2022 stars than they received in 2021. While there are 140 new Star Libraries for 2022, 138 Star Libraries for 2021 lost star status.

STILL STARS, NEW CONSTELLATIONS

A dozen public libraries remained Star Libraries while moving from one expenditure category to another between 2021 and 2022. Half of those libraries moved up one spending category, while the other half moved down one category.

The six libraries that remain Star Libraries after moving up from one expenditure category to another are: California’s Palo Alto City Library (four to five stars, \$5–9.9M to \$10–29.9M); Oregon’s Port Orford Public Library (four to five stars, \$100–199.9K to \$200–399.9K); Nebraska’s Ashland Public Library (maintaining three stars, \$100–199.9K to \$200–399.9K) and Ravenna Public Library (maintaining three stars, \$50–99.9K to \$100–199.9K); Iowa’s Elk Horn Public Library (five to three stars, \$10–49.9K to \$50–99.9K); and South Dakota’s Lemmon Public Library (five to four stars, \$10–49.9K to \$50–99.9K).

The six libraries that remained Star Libraries after moving down from one expenditure category to another are: California’s San Mateo County Libraries (maintaining five stars, \$30M+ to \$10–29.9M); Missouri’s North Kansas City Public Library (maintaining five stars, \$1–4.9M to \$400–999.9K) and Carrollton Public Library (four to five stars,

TABLE 6 2021 & 2022 STAR LIBRARIES REPORTING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 (JULY 2019–JUNE 2020) BY STATE

STATE	2021 STAR LIBRARIES	2022 STAR LIBRARIES	DIFFERENCE
IA	11	22	+11
IL	7	14	+7
MA	13	20	+7
AZ	0	5	+5
OR	6	9	+3
KY	2	4	+2
MI	1	3	+2
NY	10	12	+2
VA	4	6	+2
CA	11	12	+1
CT	1	2	+1
ME	0	1	+1
NM	1	2	+1
OK	2	3	+1
VT	1	2	+1
MD	3	3	0
MO	4	4	0
NV	1	1	0
SC	2	2	0
TN	2	2	0
UT	2	2	0
MT	5	4	-1
AK	4	2	-2
TOTAL	93	137	+44

TABLE 7 2021 & 2022 STAR LIBRARIES REPORTING FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020 (JANUARY–DECEMBER 2020) BY STATE

STATE	2021 STAR LIBRARIES	2022 STAR LIBRARIES	DIFFERENCE
OH	26	3	-23
NY	20	8	-12
WI	8	0	-8
CO	10	5	-5
PA	5	0	-5
SD	8	3	-5
IN	5	1	-4
KS	12	9	-3
MN	5	2	-3
NJ	4	1	-3
WA	3	0	-3
AR	1	0	-1
NH	1	0	-1
UT	1	0	-1
LA	1	1	0
ME	2	3	+1
ND	1	2	+1
TX	2	4	+2
TOTAL	115	42	-73

\$200–399.9K to \$100–199.9K); New York’s Red Hook Public Library (maintaining five stars, \$400–999.9K to \$200–399.9K); Vermont’s Craftsbury Public Library (four to five stars, \$100–199.9K to \$50–99.9K); and Eleanor Daggett Memorial Library in Chama, NM, (three to five stars, \$50–99.9K to \$10–49.9K).

ALWAYS STARS

What is perhaps most extraordinary about the 2022 round of Star Libraries is that it identifies 25 public libraries that have been Star Libraries in every edition for 15 years. Considering the changes in the services provided by public libraries over that period, and how those changes have been reflected in the evolution of the *LJ* Index—not to mention a seismic event like 2020’s onset of COVID—it is remarkable that there should be any.

Of the 25 always-Star Libraries, two are especially noteworthy. Michigan’s Ann Arbor District Library and Massachusetts’s Wellfleet Public Library have been five-Star libraries in every round for 15 years. (See the online version of this article for a Q&A with the Ann Arbor library’s leaders.)

Fourteen states have one or more always-Star Libraries. New York state has the most with seven, followed by Nebraska with three. Three states—Colorado, Illinois, and Massachusetts—have two always-Star Libraries each. And eight states have one always-Star Library each: Alabama, Alaska, California, Maine, Michigan, Montana, Ohio, Oregon, and Texas. Notably, the states with always-Star Libraries represent every region of the nation: Northeast (MA, ME, NY), South (AL, TX), Midwest (IL, MI, NE, OH), and West (AK, CA, CO, MT, OR).

STATES WITH MOST & FEWEST 2022 STARS

As discussed above, reporting period had a significant impact on states’ gains and losses of Star library status. The 23 states with libraries reporting for July 2019 to June 2020 had 93 Star Libraries in 2021 and 137 in 2022, a net gain of 44. Of these 23 states, four gained five or more

new Star Libraries in this latest round: Iowa, 11; Illinois and Massachusetts, seven each; and Arizona, five. Eleven of those states gained between one and three new Star Libraries; six states neither gained nor lost Star Libraries; and two states saw minor losses—Montana, one, and Alaska, two.

The 18 states with libraries reporting for calendar 2020 had 115 Star Libraries in 2021 and 42 in 2022, a net loss of

73. Of these 18 states, three lost the greatest numbers of Star Libraries: Ohio, 23; New York, 12; and Wisconsin, all eight of its 2021 Stars. Eleven states lost one to five Star Libraries each; one state, Louisiana, lost none; and three states saw minor gains—Alaska, two, and Maine and North Dakota, one each.

STATES WITH NO STAR LIBRARIES

There are no 2022 Star Libraries in 14 states: Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Surprisingly, only four of these states—Arkansas, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wisconsin—are ones whose reporting period was calendar 2020, the most disadvantaged schedule. Reporting period impacts were least for seven—Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Florida and Mississippi were in the middle, with report periods including seven months of exposure to pandemic-related impacts. The remaining state, New Hampshire, allowed libraries to report for 12 months between July 2019 and December 2020, so some reported on July to June and others the calendar year.

Despite the impact of reporting periods, the data do not point to the state reporting pe-

riod as the explanation for a state having no Star Libraries. Instead, it is more likely that an absence of Star Libraries in a state can be attributed a relatively small number of public libraries, more libraries organized on a county or multi-jurisdictional basis (see the 2017 Star Libraries article), and/or relatively low per-capita funding.

It is noteworthy that 12 of the 14 states with no Star Libraries are ones where the average total operating expenditures per capita for public libraries scored on the *LJ* Index is lower—often substantially lower—than the average for the nation as a whole. (See Table 8.)

Conversely, nine of the 13 states with five or more 2022 Star Libraries have average total operating expenditures per capita for libraries scored on the *LJ* Index that are higher than the national average. (See Table 9.)

What these findings tell us about the relationship between library expenditures and service output is that, while superior funding levels substantially improve the odds of a library generating superior quantities of service output, it is not an ironclad guarantee. Factors difficult-to-impossible to quantify—community support, board and director leadership, and staff effort—also play critical roles. ■

TABLE 9 TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES SCORED ON THE *LJ* INDEX FOR STATES WITH 5 OR MORE 2022 STAR LIBRARIES (BASED ON 2020 DATA)

STATE	NUMBER OF STAR LIBRARIES, 2022	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA, 2020
CA	12	\$65.56
CO	5	\$71.59
IA	22	\$38.99
IL	43	\$66.81
KS	9	\$63.58
MA	20	\$59.89
MI	12	\$38.61
MO	11	\$35.06
NE	17	\$57.44
NY	22	\$67.89
OR	9	\$54.79
VA	6	\$35.37
VT	6	\$53.65
U.S. TOTAL*	258	\$46.49

* The U.S. total includes all 50 states and D.C.

TABLE 8 TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES SCORED ON THE *LJ* INDEX FOR STATES WITH NO 2022 STAR LIBRARIES (BASED ON 2020 DATA)

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA, 2020	
AR	\$28.46
DE	\$32.34
FL	\$28.63
GA	\$18.30
HI	\$28.92
MS	\$15.91
NC	\$25.60
NH	\$55.20
PA	\$23.00
VA	\$35.37
WA	\$67.28
WI	\$43.34
WV	\$19.04
WY	\$74.07
U.S. TOTAL*	\$46.49

* The U.S. total includes all 50 states and D.C.

THE STAR LIBRARIES 2022

We are pleased to announce the results of the 15th edition of the *LJ* Index of Public Library Service. The *LJ* Index rates U.S. public libraries based on selected per capita output measures. The 2022 scores and ratings are based on FY20 data from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Public Library Survey (PLS). For 2022—based on 2020 data—5,359 public libraries received *LJ* Index scores, and 258 of them received Stars.

A star symbol (★) following library names indicates new Star Libraries for 2022.

EXPENDITURE RANGE \$30,000,000+

LIBRARY	STATE	PER CAPITA										SCORE
		LEGAL SERVICE AREA POPULATION	PHYSICAL CIRCULATION	E-MATERIAL CIRCULATION	LIBRARY VISITS	PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	PUBLIC COMPUTER USERS	WI-FI SESSIONS	ELECTRONIC RETRIEVALS	LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS		
★ Saint Louis County Library	MO	859,148	16.28	2.46	6.00	0.80	1.12	0.87	0.84	6.34	2252	
★ Santa Clara County Library	CA	444,238	13.91	4.68	5.28	0.48	0.63	2.98	4.53	5.36	1898	
★ San Francisco Public Library	CA	897,806	6.76	5.34	4.25	0.33	0.60	4.26	2.25	7.29	1573	
★ Multnomah County Library	OR	821,730	12.76	5.23	3.01	0.22	0.54	1.39	0.02	3.51	1333	
★ Tulsa City-County Library System★	OK	651,552	10.27	1.61	3.06	0.49	0.59	0.94	3.91	3.09	1234	
★ Nashville Public Library★	TN	694,144	5.02	2.92	3.37	0.49	0.48	1.09	1.02	7.52	1227	
★ East Baton Rouge Parish Library	LA	439,729	2.81	2.38	2.17	0.42	0.47	1.57	5.24	15.21	1193	
★ Baltimore County Public Library★	MD	832,468	7.63	1.83	3.37	0.23	0.71	0.76	1.81	5.17	1097	
★ Mid-Continent Public Library (Independence)★	MO	762,446	6.16	4.13	2.50	0.31	0.40	0.29	5.91	6.38	1080	
★ District of Columbia Public Library★	DC	689,545	2.96	2.94	2.69	0.34	0.68	0.51	2.17	5.85	1035	
★ San Diego Public Library★	CA	1,430,489	3.94	0.39	3.76	0.28	0.53	0.47	13.97	3.90	925	
★ Phoenix Public Library★	AZ	1,634,061	3.22	4.30	1.43	0.12	0.31	2.57	1.84	11.69	907	
★ Arapahoe Library District	CO	270,550	5.41	5.54	1.38	0.09	0.19	0.18	1.42	11.99	902	
★ Metropolitan Library System★	OK	797,434	2.67	2.98	2.71	0.11	0.66	2.07	1.06	5.90	901	
★ San José Public Library★	CA	1,049,187	5.64	0.97	3.84	0.26	0.60	0.29	0.66	2.22	898	

EXPENDITURE RANGE \$10M–29.9M

LIBRARY	STATE	PER CAPITA									SCORE
		LEGAL SERVICE AREA POPULATION	PHYSICAL CIRCULATION	E-MATERIAL CIRCULATION	LIBRARY VISITS	PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	PUBLIC COMPUTER USERS	WI-FI SESSIONS	ELECTRONIC RETRIEVALS	LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS	
Naperville Public Library	IL	147,449	22.52	3.16	10.46	0.79	2.19	4.92	9.22	15.09	2669
Arlington Heights Memorial Library★	IL	75,101	22.37	3.08	13.24	1.20	1.44	5.96	4.70	16.24	2637
Ann Arbor District Library	MI	163,590	30.17	5.73	7.48	0.82	0.54	15.68	0.48	14.44	2553
Skokie Public Library★	IL	64,784	22.88	3.66	9.84	0.91	1.13	5.72	2.62	19.78	2336
Charleston County PL System	SC	350,209	0.13	2.55	3.28	0.31	2.01	1.44	10.24	35.57	1902
Palo Alto City Library	CA	69,226	15.15	2.11	9.59	0.44	1.16	3.85	6.84	10.27	1867
Henrico County Public Library	VA	324,395	8.63	3.35	4.27	0.25	0.80	7.60	8.78	3.98	1571
Kent District Library	MI	395,660	16.80	2.55	6.57	1.21	0.88	2.29	0.88	3.57	1560
Cambridge Public Library	MA	118,977	9.55	2.17	5.79	0.59	1.71	2.86	4.74	6.88	1537
San Mateo County Libraries	CA	284,138	7.90	2.39	5.10	0.84	0.62	10.60	0.88	7.32	1467
Howard County Library System	MD	321,113	13.41	2.40	4.40	0.59	1.28	0.63	6.06	5.41	1456
Salt Lake City Public Library System	UT	200,567	10.12	3.26	4.66	0.46	0.95	2.03	5.86	4.36	1392
Kenton County Public Library	KY	166,998	8.35	3.27	3.61	0.75	0.72	0.25	7.79	3.90	1389
Eugene Public Library	OR	171,210	9.89	2.41	4.63	0.24	0.64	9.97	2.01	8.17	1336
Santa Monica Public Library	CA	92,357	12.36	2.07	8.01	0.42	1.03	0.65	1.31	7.43	1291
Schaumburg Township District Library	IL	126,849	14.47	1.44	5.40	0.56	0.72	2.14	3.68	5.10	1270
Berkeley Public Library	CA	122,580	11.76	5.09	5.05	0.33	0.98	0.67	0.68	4.02	1265
Kansas City Public Library	MO	218,765	4.02	4.06	5.08	0.33	1.13	0.52	0.54	13.00	1187
Lexington Public Library★	KY	323,152	10.33	2.05	3.56	0.39	1.22	1.54	1.22	13.31	1180
Fountaindale Public Library District★	IL	67,683	8.51	1.21	4.37	1.12	0.70	2.72	1.24	4.41	1159
Capital Area District Library★	MI	238,859	8.06	2.42	4.49	0.94	0.81	0.90	0.19	5.60	1126
Loudoun County Public Library	VA	396,068	9.27	3.44	3.78	0.61	0.41	0.64	2.54	3.03	1083
Richland County Public Library	SC	384,504	5.15	3.79	3.47	0.29	1.26	0.60	1.74	4.40	1038
Central Rappahannock Regional Library★	VA	322,653	7.99	1.38	3.13	0.21	0.35	3.87	1.15	20.07	1034
City of St. Louis Municipal Library District★	MO	319,294	5.55	1.11	3.05	0.30	0.52	4.27	0.76	21.01	1029
Springfield-Greene County Library District	MO	275,174	7.34	1.38	4.93	0.27	0.67	2.19	4.25	4.50	1014
Daniel Boone Regional Library (Columbia)★	MO	203,190	8.56	3.70	3.50	0.26	0.71	0.70	0.81	5.85	978
Carroll County Public Library	MD	167,781	13.98	1.56	3.89	0.66	0.44	0.42	0.47	4.43	965
Deschutes Public Library District★	OR	193,000	6.38	4.51	2.99	0.36	0.38	0.70	0.51	6.97	956
Arlington Dept. of Libraries★	VA	239,074	8.76	3.43	2.36	0.43	0.50	1.53	0.51	6.00	941

EXPENDITURE RANGE \$5M–9.9M

LIBRARY	STATE	PER CAPITA									SCORE
		LEGAL SERVICE AREA POPULATION	PHYSICAL CIRCULATION	E-MATERIAL CIRCULATION	LIBRARY VISITS	PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	PUBLIC COMPUTER USERS	WI-FI SESSIONS	ELECTRONIC RETRIEVALS	LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS	
Elmhurst Public Library	IL	44,121	23.38	2.06	13.35	1.35	6.65	6.60	7.83	36.48	3086
Wilmette Public Library District	IL	27,087	18.03	11.08	8.32	0.80	0.60	32.10	2.42	6.57	2428
Oak Park Public Library	IL	51,878	27.41	3.93	12.60	0.85	2.31	11.73	5.28	16.03	2370
Elk Grove Village Public Library★	IL	22,104	23.06	4.25	11.43	1.51	1.35	1.36	4.25	10.89	2117
Northbrook Public Library	IL	33,170	22.36	2.98	10.11	1.25	0.78	5.08	8.60	16.28	1937
Cook Memorial PL District★	IL	59,842	13.03	2.72	6.52	0.54	0.58	29.33	28.35	16.91	1895
Ela Area Public Library District	IL	34,462	17.02	2.33	5.78	0.64	3.26	7.07	4.15	9.25	1740
Westport Library★	CT	28,491	8.11	2.29	11.66	2.01	0.67	1.28	2.13	16.42	1712
Downers Grove Public Library★	IL	49,213	21.81	2.11	10.00	0.73	1.11	0.57	2.78	12.16	1616
Des Plaines Public Library	IL	58,364	16.14	2.22	6.84	1.32	1.31	2.37	4.82	6.06	1567
Barrington Public Library District	IL	44,157	9.94	5.12	4.87	0.62	0.34	3.79	1.50	27.97	1413
Port Washington Public Library	NY	31,071	6.01	2.49	8.58	1.38	0.96	4.49	1.49	7.66	1407
Vernon Area Public Library District	IL	41,055	12.68	3.50	5.64	1.15	0.49	3.67	5.71	4.84	1399
Plainview–Old Bethpage PL★	NY	28,676	7.28	2.24	10.38	1.38	0.37	2.99	3.51	4.56	1377
Mount Prospect Public Library★	IL	54,167	16.37	1.23	7.30	0.74	0.98	4.02	3.79	13.59	1377
Cedar Mill Community Library	OR	81,906	18.60	4.15	5.58	0.82	0.23	0.49	0.79	2.65	1333
Burlingame Public Library	CA	37,730	15.45	1.87	6.73	0.66	0.70	14.75	0.62	2.72	1326
Comsewogue Public Library	NY	23,752	13.97	3.96	4.72	0.83	0.25	0.43	5.13	11.84	1319
Bloomfield Township Public Library★	MI	41,070	16.12	3.57	4.43	0.59	0.47	0.47	8.37	8.37	1303
Newport Beach Public Library	CA	85,780	10.24	2.40	7.30	0.68	0.61	2.03	12.74	6.12	1299
Champaign Public Library	IL	81,055	16.10	1.99	7.43	0.55	0.88	0.98	2.57	5.53	1261
Cleveland Heights–University Heights PL	OH	57,867	16.12	4.65	3.93	0.34	0.77	1.97	0.58	4.55	1244
Williamsburg Regional Library	VA	90,126	7.11	3.68	4.27	1.01	0.80	2.31	4.06	4.97	1222
Northport Public Library★	NY	36,113	4.71	3.20	6.31	0.69	1.10	2.11	1.25	12.95	1202
Evanston Public Library★	IL	74,486	13.18	2.11	7.25	0.56	0.81	3.83	0.02	6.18	1201
Saint Charles Public Library District★	IL	55,092	14.58	2.02	3.08	0.68	0.55	3.69	9.81	9.33	1198
Syosset Public Library★	NY	34,200	6.31	2.17	9.77	0.78	0.63	0.00	2.17	7.55	1185
Sachem Public Library	NY	83,196	5.98	1.82	5.48	1.39	0.81	1.24	1.55	2.50	1139
Niles-Maine District Library★	IL	57,284	11.69	1.07	4.18	1.11	0.77	1.90	2.93	5.90	1120
Corvallis-Benton County PL★	OR	86,105	12.85	2.07	4.78	0.37	0.44	5.03	1.36	16.24	1102
Indian Trails Public Library District★	IL	67,010	8.40	2.04	4.40	0.38	0.65	1.63	1.55	28.23	1086

EXPENDITURE RANGE \$1M–4.9M

LIBRARY	STATE	PER CAPITA									SCORE
		LEGAL SERVICE AREA POPULATION	PHYSICAL CIRCULATION	E-MATERIAL CIRCULATION	LIBRARY VISITS	PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	PUBLIC COMPUTER USERS	WI-FI SESSIONS	ELECTRONIC RETRIEVALS	LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS	
West Tisbury Free Public Library	MA	2,901	29.20	5.74	33.22	7.16	8.51	46.23	3.57	296.82	6250
Cutchogue New Suffolk Free Library	NY	3,684	26.63	5.18	37.73	5.62	1.02	8.46	10.51	5.64	3453
Port Jefferson Free Library	NY	7,570	28.10	6.66	15.24	6.85	1.06	3.69	1.96	9.38	3006
Westhampton Free Library	NY	5,571	25.93	8.40	15.34	6.10	1.52	2.91	3.83	4.56	3004
West Bloomfield Township PL	MI	71,755	34.71	1.94	15.59	0.83	4.45	1.68	0.87	38.24	2755
Center Moriches Free Public Library	NY	7,546	13.46	5.93	18.05	6.27	1.05	2.23	1.99	25.08	2675
Glencoe Public Library★	IL	8,723	21.39	13.27	13.08	1.46	2.40	2.55	13.27	2.75	2587
Lincoln Public Library★	MA	6,797	11.04	3.36	9.09	0.73	4.12	0.00	4.07	131.50	2331
Hudson Library and Historical Society	OH	22,262	31.31	10.81	14.22	1.40	0.17	1.43	1.13	10.56	2297
Jericho Public Library	NY	17,348	12.69	3.28	15.76	0.88	4.25	3.78	2.90	16.47	2235
Lake Forest Library★	IL	19,375	15.32	2.57	18.85	1.80	1.01	35.39	4.12	9.76	2111
Harrison Memorial Library	CA	3,949	21.48	6.86	16.34	1.03	1.38	1.50	2.59	9.53	2100
Smoky Valley Library District	NV	1,733	18.19	0.56	16.49	3.65	1.05	3.53	3.65	4.77	2029
Park City Library	UT	8,526	8.01	2.49	18.01	3.74	1.18	3.88	0.75	17.85	2014
Bronxville Public Library	NY	6,323	16.38	1.44	18.01	2.34	1.47	1.61	0.43	15.08	1977
Deerfield Public Library★	IL	18,225	23.30	4.32	13.40	1.51	1.00	6.57	1.94	12.56	1968
Amagansett Free Library★	NY	1,365	16.22	7.40	3.81	3.28	1.10	2.67	0.03	17.79	1922
Glen Ellyn Public Library★	IL	27,450	24.15	2.00	9.45	1.15	0.76	38.15	6.94	7.05	1877
Mary Riley Styles PL (Falls Church)	VA	14,269	14.22	10.09	14.65	0.74	0.40	1.39	1.24	23.37	1870
Brooks Free Library★	MA	12,133	11.66	3.17	11.37	1.10	3.08	1.00	5.70	5.01	1840
Simsbury Public Library★	CT	25,395	12.80	1.54	10.30	2.04	2.49	0.35	1.29	4.88	1760
Wellesley Free Library★	MA	29,673	17.91	3.28	9.49	0.73	1.75	11.80	5.86	10.59	1737
Fayetteville Free Library	NY	10,347	13.06	5.01	9.95	1.39	1.60	5.26	0.23	6.19	1713
San Miguel Library District #1 (Telluride)	CO	6,521	15.42	7.47	6.25	1.26	0.88	10.05	4.96	7.93	1686
Way Public Library★	OH	20,623	23.35	6.07	9.62	0.59	0.45	8.74	0.70	1.69	1682
Prospect Heights PL District★	IL	14,073	12.15	1.70	6.92	2.94	0.47	34.16	2.19	11.55	1682
Plymouth District Library★	MI	36,656	18.27	2.60	8.58	0.64	0.83	4.17	2.23	75.99	1668
Desert Foothills Library★	AZ	5,940	11.27	2.21	10.76	2.33	0.14	0.15	1.04	63.51	1596
Cary Memorial Library★	MA	33,792	18.14	3.56	10.06	0.75	0.92	8.25	3.43	6.90	1580
La Grange Public Library★	IL	15,550	17.97	2.63	12.65	0.93	0.80	3.50	1.18	7.70	1575
Weston Public Library★	MA	12,134	19.32	2.51	10.57	1.19	0.45	10.41	1.13	5.95	1554

EXPENDITURE RANGE \$400K–999.9K

LIBRARY	STATE	PER CAPITA									SCORE
		LEGAL SERVICE AREA POPULATION	PHYSICAL CIRCULATION	E-MATERIAL CIRCULATION	LIBRARY VISITS	PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	PUBLIC COMPUTER USERS	WI-FI SESSIONS	ELECTRONIC RETRIEVALS	LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS	
Leslie County Public Library	KY	9,877	26.63	17.42	6.69	1.13	14.16	37.98	19.79	0.96	5172
Wellfleet Public Library	MA	2,729	23.21	6.28	26.27	8.14	3.85	2.97	6.13	5.39	2974
Homer Public Library	AK	5,478	26.42	4.43	23.45	1.45	5.90	2.33	0.79	10.23	2929
Camden Public Library	ME	4,806	20.26	6.54	19.06	7.76	2.54	14.95	0.43	10.14	2911
Provincetown Public Library	MA	2,960	9.81	2.55	32.38	1.78	2.92	20.30	1.52	13.09	2814
Haines Borough Public Library	AK	2,516	18.91	1.52	24.48	0.61	3.70	20.39	0.79	5.38	2811
Quogue Library	NY	1,080	19.38	12.53	18.93	2.99	0.00	4.63	0.35	12.50	2295
Pinckney Community Public Library★	MI	11,503	7.18	1.35	9.69	1.36	5.65	0.00	1.55	73.47	2245
Snow Library	MA	5,798	17.40	3.46	14.32	2.07	2.56	12.94	3.82	0.56	2217
North Kansas City Public Library	MO	4,208	18.42	5.13	13.07	1.04	1.72	1.77	3.09	58.71	2199
Jamestown Philomenian Library★	RI	5,451	11.60	3.41	12.39	1.27	0.95	0.97	1467.62	24.68	2194
Taos Public Library★	NM	5,716	23.22	2.50	16.97	0.49	3.11	2.34	8.12	2.71	2113
Osterville Village Library	MA	4,344	17.85	2.75	16.01	3.91	2.47	1.22	1.66	15.54	2057
Eldredge Public Library★	MA	6,100	10.04	3.64	20.83	1.69	4.09	0.00	1.49	4.65	2031
Sioux Center Public Library★	IA	10,478	18.89	2.21	15.41	0.81	2.74	3.27	4.38	12.37	1999
Curry Public Library District★	OR	4,992	11.00	1.66	24.10	2.07	2.00	3.93	0.00	8.42	1937
Lake Bluff Public Library★	IL	5,722	12.23	2.62	9.75	1.72	0.52	19.25	1.35	15.23	1920
Garden Home Community Library★	OR	5,604	21.76	6.28	12.46	1.25	1.17	0.86	0.77	2.21	1823
Petersburg Public Library★	AK	3,226	16.37	1.52	12.42	2.65	2.02	4.96	0.79	6.11	1802
Foley Public Library★	AL	18,928	18.24	5.46	14.10	0.35	1.58	1.37	2.30	4.94	1793
Shelter Island Public Library Society	NY	2,392	6.06	6.89	16.04	2.32	0.40	5.53	1.06	26.04	1769
Southwest Harbor Public Library	ME	1,793	16.17	4.11	6.81	3.73	1.10	4.74	35.71	16.86	1756
Vineyard Haven Public Library★	MA	4,111	13.01	2.95	11.18	1.52	3.28	1.54	1.87	4.62	1748
Orange Beach Public Library★	AL	6,114	14.73	3.54	15.30	2.02	1.09	4.00	0.63	2.09	1709
Lee Memorial Library★	NJ	6,505	10.05	2.96	6.43	1.82	3.23	6.25	0.20	3.77	1682
Rockland Public Library★	ME	7,183	9.33	0.98	12.34	1.21	1.31	4.47	0.84	43.01	1677
Oak Bluffs Public Library	MA	4,678	8.39	3.07	9.66	2.39	2.00	7.91	1.53	3.86	1635
Adams Public Library System★	IN	10,698	15.61	6.49	9.35	0.34	0.68	2.94	0.62	15.61	1634
Ardsley Public Library★	NY	4,452	19.50	1.77	10.97	0.67	1.53	0.91	0.21	10.97	1621
Library District #2, Linn County★	KS	2,569	3.66	1.92	8.40	5.10	2.96	4.87	2.18	2.34	1562