

AT A GLANCE



Douglas County Libraries 

Douglas County Libraries At a Glance

Douglas County Libraries elevates our community by inspiring a love of reading, discovery and connection. We play a vital role in the life of our community through lending materials, providing electronic resources, supporting early literacy, offering reservable meeting and study spaces, providing reference assistance, and through countless other invaluable library services and events.

Douglas County Libraries has prioritized sustainability and modern design in our seven locations—Castle Pines, Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree, Louviers, Parker, and Roxborough—creating inviting spaces for customers of all ages and ensuring that the library remains a vital community hub. These aren't just places for reading or to grab a book, they are vibrant community centers where people can gather, escape, learn and grow.

Douglas County Libraries offers a variety of services,



programs, and events for families. Some of these include our popular Storytimes; Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, delivering free books monthly to children ages 0-5; and unique playscapes where families can spend time in an interactive learning environment. Each summer, the library also hosts weeklong camps for children ages 5-12; a two-month Summer Reading celebration featuring events, prizes and giveaways; and smaller events based on timely topics. See a more comprehensive list below.

In addition to premium spaces and services for customer-designed events of all types, the library offers themed party packages for special occasions, including birthday parties for kids ages 2-7, baby and wedding showers, and weddings. The Events & Hospitality team works directly with customers to provide these and other premium event offerings.

Douglas County Libraries is nearing the completion of a 10-year master facilities plan. As we have built and/or renovated almost all of our locations, we are looking to complete the plan in the next few years. In addition, we are working on a new strategic plan that is based on community input and demand. We will continue to provide a premium environment, experiences, and spaces for the community we serve.



DCL Services

- Circulation, consisting of the provision of popular books, e-books, periodicals, audios, videos, children's materials, reference materials, and other library content for lending use to the public;
- Online services, consisting of the District's website, research resources, tools for online learning and homework help, and an online catalog of downloadable materials;
- Community gathering spaces, including public computers and wireless access, large public meeting rooms, and smaller, private meeting/study rooms;
- Friendly, professional staff who welcome all, and are empowered to interact with customers with CARE (Creative Action, Responsive Engagement);
- Reader's advisory services, consisting of collaboration with customers to determine their likes and dislikes and recommend appropriate reading materials;
- Children's events that emphasize development of early literacy skills that enable children to translate words to images, develop their brains, and nurture the cognitive, emotional and social skills they need to develop the habits of lifelong learners;
- Signature events that celebrate stories and literature, bring popular authors to customers in Douglas County and beyond, and create memory-making traditions for families, with an emphasis on creating and strengthening family and community connections;
- Reference services that provide informational and research assistance to customers, entrepreneurs and small business persons;
- Events and activities that address a variety of needs or interests among all age groups: summer reading, pairing teens and therapy dogs with struggling young readers, group reading comprehension competitions, senior services, community events, book clubs, hands-on science experiments, creative workshops, High School Equivalency (HSE), English as a Second Language (ESL), current affairs, technology literacy, small business skills, and more;
- Douglas County Archives & Local History, which collects and preserves the history of Douglas County in order to provide historical research resources to the public.

2024 Fun Facts



Library visitation, circulation, events, event attendance, and both free and paid room usage grew over the prior year.

Summer Reading, Fairy Tale Ball, all four Storybook Holiday events, Camp DCL, Battle of the Books, and the DCL Foundation's Fête des Fables Gala all outperformed the prior year.

Foundation earnings through its primary fundraisers (Fête des Fables, Colorado Gives Day, Year-end Giving) grew to unprecedented levels in 2024.



Including Storytime, DCL served more than 168,000 people at 4,680 children's events.

eAudiobooks surpassed eBooks in circulation on Libby for the first time, with a 22% increase from 2023 to 2024; 58,741 customers checked out an eAudiobook last year.



2024 Fun Facts



The collection with the highest turnover was the audio easy reader collection, including Wonderbooks (easy/early readers with preloaded audiobooks built in).

The top-circulating genre in Libby is romance.

Customers picked up 571,570 holds.



Mondays are our busiest days for checkouts, and after Storytime, around 11am, is the busiest time of day for checkouts.

The furthest destination to which we sent a DCL item via interlibrary loan was Alaska.



Douglas County Libraries

SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND EVENTS

ADULT LITERACY & HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PREP Adult customers can discover a path to college or a better career by earning an accredited high school diploma with help from DCL volunteers. Trained volunteer tutors also help adult learners with basic literacy skills and English as a second language through group experiences or via learning plans personalized to help adults reach their goals.

AGELESS SERVICES We serve older adults through a suite of services that includes informal opportunities for connection, materials delivery to senior living communities, events that appeal to older audiences, and opportunities to volunteer in our libraries. We also highlight Care Kits, book clubs, and continuing education opportunities for this audience.

AMAZON BOOK SALES Used book sales on Amazon Marketplace connect quality, curated, slightly used books to customers searching for them on Amazon. Sales support our Foundation.

AUTHOR EVENTS DCL regularly hosts bestselling authors, local authors, children's authors and more, to engage every kind of reader and connect our customers to the people responsible for our favorite books and stories. Author events accommodate 30-1,000 attendees, depending on the venue; events are held both in our branches and at other venues across the county. In 2024, we welcomed novelists C.J. Box, Jack Carr, Joel H. Harris, Stephen Graham Jones, William Kent Krueger, Daniel Silva, Cynthia Swanson, and Carter Wilson.

BARK FOR BOOKS Bark for Books helps budding and reluctant young readers build confidence and self-esteem by reading aloud to trained therapy dogs without pressure or judgment. Research demonstrates that children who regularly read aloud have improved concentration skills, increased reading comprehension and fluency, and enjoy the experience of reading.

BATTLE OF THE BOOKS (BOTB) Now in its second decade, BOTB encourages 3rd-6th graders from more than 40 elementary schools in Douglas County to read and compete head-to-head on their knowledge of a 10-title book list. Nearly 1,000 children compete each year,

and thousands of parents, siblings and friends witness weekly battles that lead up to the finals and the naming of the champions.

BETTER IMPACT This user-friendly app connects curious and established volunteers with opportunities across DCL, from helping with DCL events, services and collections, to meeting court-mandated or high school graduation community service requirements.

BIBLIOCOMMONS Our library catalog provides advanced search, helping connect customers with the materials they want. It is also a rich source of reading recommendations, through lists highlighted within the catalog itself and on our website, from newly-acquired titles, to staff-curated collections, by audience, format, season, topic, genre, or status as an award winner or bestseller.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES DCL's customized parties for kids ages 2-7 help families celebrate important milestones, and help grow kids' attachments to their local library and their favorite stories and characters. Parties include branded invitations and thank-you notes, plus age-appropriate activities, Storytime, a free book for the birthday boy/girl, treats and goody bags.

BOOK CLUB EXPRESS (BCE) BCE serves book groups which meet outside the library, helping customers build community and connection through reading and discussion. Reservable kits include 10-12 copies of a popular selection, an author bio, author interview, and discussion questions. We regularly update adult, young adult and children's titles for demand, appeal, and variety.

BOOK CLUBS These classic opportunities to come together and connect with others also help foster a shared love of reading. We offer dozens of library-supported book clubs for youth and adults, spanning many genres and topics, and encourage participation through robust marketing.

BOOK LOVERS These popular events deliver curated book recommendations to about 600 avid, passionate readers a year, helping to satisfy their interests in books and authors. Some Book Lovers events feature guest appearances by publishers' representatives, helping Douglas County citizens connect with books at their source.



BOOK START Trained volunteers travel to at-home and commercial daycare providers throughout Douglas County, providing weekly Storytimes, early literacy content, and literacy-based activities. Book Start introduces Storytime basics to kids who might not otherwise be able to attend library Storytime.

BOOKED FOR THE HOLIDAYS This suite of popular annual winter holiday events each November and December includes the unlimited wonder of Forest of Stories, our classic winter Storybook Holiday celebration, festive singalongs, and visits with Santa. In 2023 and 2024, all events with registration filled to capacity and had wait lists.

CAMP DCL Each summer, DCL opens its doors to campers ages 5-12 for full- and half-day camps themed around popular subjects such as art, cooking, science, and engineering. Camp DCL helps keep kids' minds engaged, connecting them to fun, in-depth, hands-on learning. Popular with parents, campers, and teen volunteers, Camp DCL regularly fills to capacity or near capacity.

CARE KITS Our specialized, self-contained kits for kids, adults, and caregivers contain materials to help those struggling with anxiety, loss related to suicide, familial military deployments, and memory issues. Multigenerational and road trip kits entertain and facilitate interpersonal connections, and STEAM kits inspire curiosity and wonder.

CHECK OUT COLORADO A limited number of backpacks containing passes good for admission to any Colorado state park are available for checkout from our welcome desks, connecting customers to the natural world around us, in beautiful Douglas County and beyond.

CHILDREN'S CARD For children under 15, DCL offers parents or guardians the option of limiting their children's physical borrowing, and borrowing via Libby, to the children's collection alone. Accounts automatically revert to full access when each child turns 15.

COLORADO GIVES DAY (CGD) On the first Tuesday of each December, the DCL Foundation participates in Colorado Gives Day, a statewide, online celebration of philanthropy, which encourages charitable giving through marketing and an incentive fund. CGD reaches tens of thousands of community members and results in hundreds of donations annually, helping support the DCLF's mission.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DCL leadership participates on local boards and task forces to help contribute to community dialogue, connect people to resources, and grow a thriving environment. These relationships often encompass joint projects such as Mental Health Awareness and the Douglas County Youth Substance Abuse Coalition.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS Douglas County Libraries forms strategic and mutually beneficial partnerships with local businesses and community organizations. These offer all partners unique ways to reach and engage diverse audiences, promote their businesses and programs, provide entertaining and educational events, and fulfill strategic initiatives, as well as leverage resources. Partners include chambers of commerce, economic development councils, the Partnership of Douglas County Governments, and Douglas County Youth Initiative.

COMMUNITY ROOM USAGE Meeting and study room spaces in every library are available to community groups for their own programs. Community members with similar interests use our spaces to meet, talk, and work on projects.

Groups include knitters, genealogists, gamers, book clubs and more. Most room usage is self-service and fee-free.

CUDDLE UP & READ No baby is too young to visit us for Storytime, or to have a library card of his or her own. Through Cuddle Up & Read and the Douglas County Healthy Families Partnership, we support area hospitals in encouraging new parents to begin a lifetime of reading and discovery with their children.

DCL ARCHIVES & LOCAL HISTORY This department collects and preserves the documentary history of Douglas County, Colorado. It is a treasure trove of memorabilia, documents, and photos, plus the oral histories of veterans, ranchers, immigrants, and more, who live in Douglas County. Archivists are available by appointment, to help with historical or genealogical research, or to present to groups on historical topics.

DCL BREW TOUR Our annual tour of Douglas County breweries and coffee shops engages thousands of DCL customers, helps us reach a new audience, and strengthens our ties to our community, especially many small business partners. Participants log visits to our partner establishments and attend interactive events hosted at our libraries and select partner locations to earn points toward popular prizes.

DCL FOR BUSINESS Specialized DCL staff provide customized market research, competitive intelligence, industry trend data, business planning assistance, and more, to entrepreneurs, small businesses and Douglas County business support organizations. These unique projects answer questions like: "How do I identify local funding opportunities for my nonprofit?" "What are the demographic trends in the Town of Castle Rock?" "What is the average sales revenue of a self-storage facility in Douglas County?"

DCL FOUNDATION (DCLF) The Douglas County Libraries Foundation and its Endowment support DCL's vision, help fund programs that reach youth, adults, and families in Douglas County, and help ensure the long-term success of DCL. The DCLF helps community members attend DCL events or obtain high school credentials, promotes DCL to unique audiences, and supports outside agencies in the promotion of literacy.

DCL STAFF We regularly engage customers in conversation for the purpose of showing care, bringing their attention to resources and materials offered by our library, and educating them about resources in our community.

DCL.ORG Our website offers dynamic, relevant content to inspire customers to discover library services and materials, while also providing quick and painless access to the content people want to find. DCL.org is not only a place to showcase our collection, but a virtual destination that aligns with DCL's vision, brand, strategic priorities, and goals.

DIGITAL MEDIA With a DCL card, customers can access e-books, audiobooks, digital magazines and newspapers, movies, TV, and music for the whole family. Featured apps ensure safe searching for readers 12 and younger, including read-alongs for preschoolers, plus access to BingePass, CuriosityStream, and Craftsby, for step-by-step video instruction.

DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY (DPIL) We send books to children in our community in partnership with DPIL, because we know that reading to children early and often builds strong foundations in literacy, encourages a love of reading, and increases the potential for school success. Enrolled children from birth to age five receive a free, age-appropriate book to keep each month, mailed straight to their homes.



NEWSLETTERS Monthly opt-in emails provide customers exclusive information and updates including library news, upcoming event information, and collection highlights. Subscribers are also among the first to have access to popular signature event ticket sales.

EPIC READS Staff share curated, age-appropriate reading recommendations for students in grades 1-8 during school visits and book talks, and upon request in our libraries.

EVENTS & HOSPITALITY SERVICES

DCL offers myriad meeting and study spaces for nonprofit, community, and for-profit groups. Amenities include modern, modular furnishings and high-end technology, making spaces customizable for both corporate functions and social events. Tiered service packages accommodate events of all styles, sizes, and degrees of complexity, and include a full-service Concierge level, with DCL staff handling every detail.

FAIRY TALE BALL This annual event at six locations brings fairy tales to life with costumes and activities. Fairy Tale Ball is similar in feeling to our Storybook Holiday series, but is open to the community free of charge, with modified entertainment, activities, and catering.

FÊTE DES FABLES GALA Our annual Fête des Fables Gala is a staple of DCLF fundraising, and an important way to raise community awareness of our Foundation. Each year, Fête des Fables invites guests to enjoy cocktails and a sumptuous meal, shop a fantastic silent auction, and mingle with friends old and new, while celebrating a classic story in a charming venue.

FOREST OF STORIES Our free, interactive exhibit of decorated, book-themed trees includes more than 175 trees decked in beloved stories, from favorite children's tales to classic literature, crime thrillers, horror, comedy,

mysteries, larger-than-life characters, and more. Families looking for kid-friendly holiday entertainment and tree-peeping opportunities can find something to enjoy at every location.

HOMEBOUND DELIVERY Qualified cardholders may have library materials delivered right to their doors if illness or disability prevent visits to the library.

JUST FOR YOU Our friendly and passionate staff help readers of all ages find their next great read through personal interactions, inviting displays, informative bookmarks, and other resources.

LIBRARY EVENTS Library events provide extraordinary and memorable experiences for customers of all ages and interests. Events invite exploration and discovery, and bring customers together to socialize, learn together, and learn from each other.

LOCAL ARTIST SUPPORT Ever-changing branch art shows highlight and allow customers to discover the rich creativity of our community.

MARKETING Each year, DCL reaches out to our community with a campaign to promote our many services and to invite the community to join us. These multi-media campaigns use engaging and creative messaging to promote reading in general, and the library's collections, services, and events in particular.

MERCHANDISING DCL intentionally designs collection displays that encourage borrowing through face-out display in the stacks, featured display kiosks, and personal recommendations tucked into titles. Our customers trust our staff's recommendations, and our practices make desirable items easy to locate.

NONTRADITIONAL ITEMS Library customers can discover a new interest or passion by borrowing nontraditional items. As of January, 2025, our growing collection includes: virtual reality headset, gaming system, metal/radon/thermal leak detectors, sewing machine, microscope, telescope, projector, GoPro and other cameras, Spirograph, loom, wireless hotspot, Cricut cutting machine, digital drum set, binoculars, scanners, ukulele, Karaoke machine, coding toys, ring light, and more.

ONLINE LEARNING DCL customers have free access to digital resources like Mango Languages, CreativeBug, and LinkedIn Learning, for learning a new language, craft, or skill at the customer's own pace and convenience. These free resources can be a doorway toward the discovery of a brighter future.

OUTREACH & COMMUNITY

CELEBRATIONS DCL staff and volunteers go beyond our library walls to expand the reach of DCL by delivering services, promoting and creating brand awareness, and celebrating with our communities. Our participation at these events, festivals, and community locations helps people discover DCL and support our communities to increase the quality of life in Douglas County.

PAGE TO STAGE This traveling theater outreach program brings literature to life by adapting a classic work of children's literature to the stage and performing it free of charge at any interested Douglas County elementary school. In 2024, Page to Stage provided arts-in-education enrichment to 13,769 students via 49 school performances.

PLAYSCAPES Playscapes at six locations provide opportunities for children to learn cooperation and interpersonal skills, and to engage in imaginative play. Themes include Little Letters Post Office (Castle Pines), The Ranch (Castle Rock), Healthy Critters Vet Clinic (Highlands Ranch), Little Savers Bank & Market (Lone Tree), Plants & Pollinators (Parker), and Mission Control (Roxborough).

PLAYTIME Staying to play after Storytime provides more time for kids to interact with the library collection and other children. A variety of engaging toys encourages discovery and imagination. Through play, children build literacy skills, enhance fine motor skills, and prepare for the social demands of early schooling.

PROCTORING This value-added service allows customers an opportunity to connect with their higher education goals.

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS/BRANDED

GIVEAWAYS DCL outreach and events often feature DCL-branded giveaways with the potential to keep DCL at the top of customers' minds, even when they're not in the library. We strive to provide desirable, useful, high-quality items that people will keep in their pockets, purses, and homes, for repeated branding impressions as the items are used.

PROSPECTOR/INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Prospector gives our customers access to a combined catalog of Colorado and Wyoming library collections outside of DCL, connecting customers with more materials choices, and eliminating the need to purchase obscure or seldom-requested items. Interlibrary loan further expands our shelves across the United States.



READERS' ADVISORY Our friendly and passionate staff build relationships through personal interactions focused on reading and providing personalized reading suggestions to customers who request them in person or via our online interface.

READING BUDDIES Reading Buddies, offered twice a year at most branches, matches trained teen volunteers with reluctant young readers for eight-week sessions. Teens earn community service hours and connect with kids, and elementary school children enjoy focused time with teens and an enhanced love of books and reading.

READING CHALLENGE This annual online activity invites customers to broaden their horizons by reading 12 books of various topics, genres, and categories. Hundreds of customers complete the challenge each year.

RECORDING STUDIO The Recording Studio in Parker provides the latest in media technology, allowing customers to create videos, podcasts, musical compositions, animations, e-books, and more.

REFERENCE SERVICE This cornerstone service offers professional assistance and expertise, and connects customers with multiple kinds of information from multiple sources.

RESEARCH DATABASES DCL offers free access to a wealth of information on every topic, from magazines, journals, and educational databases including Ancestry, Auto Repair Source, Consumer Health Complete, Consumer Reports, CultureGrams, Britannica, Homework HelpNow, Investing Center, NoveList, Peterson's Test Prep, and more.

SECOND CHAPTER USED BOOK STORE DCL accepts donations of new and used books, music CDs, and DVDs, for ongoing and special book sales via stores in six library locations, and online at Amazon.com. Book sales are supported by volunteers and benefit the DCL Foundation.

SERVICE ENTERPRISE FOR VOLUNTEERS We provide meaningful opportunities for volunteers to connect their desire to give back with the library. Volunteers act as Storytime assistants, help with book sales, events, ongoing groups like TLC, and ongoing initiatives like adult literacy tutoring.

SHOWERS/WEDDINGS DCL offers beautiful event spaces for important milestone celebrations like wedding showers, weddings, baby showers, and celebrations of life. Our

wedding and baby shower packages include invitations, activities, snacks, and party favors, simplifying party planning and execution, so celebrants can focus on the guest(s) of honor.

SOCIAL MEDIA Our social media presence extends our vision to online audiences and provides another avenue to promote the discovery of library resources, collections, services, and events. We reach tens of thousands online, and regularly post inspiring quotes, library humor, event information, and reader's advisory items to inspire a love of reading, discovery, and connection.

STORYBOOK HOLIDAY Three times each year, we host holiday celebrations for families, bringing classic literature to life via food, entertainment, décor, and interactive elements to spark the imagination. Thousands of people from all generations attend these premium events each spring (around Easter), fall (around Halloween), and winter (the first weekend in December), creating new family traditions and making memories to last a lifetime.

STORYTIME Library staff provide 87 early literacy Storytimes weekly for children ages 0-5, presenting songs, rhymes, reading, and fingerplays to nurture all-important emerging reading skills. These 4,300 events each year also provide caregivers and parents opportunities to connect with their children and each other, as well as chances to build connections among kids, the library, and books.

SUMMER READING Summer Reading encourages kids to begin reading from a young age, and keeps them reading during school breaks, so they grow up with a strong foundation in literacy. More than 16,000 readers of all ages complete the reading program each year, enjoying their own summer reading traditions as well as prizes and incentives from the library.

TEACHER RESOURCES DCL supports teachers through Resources by Request, whereby staff compile sets of materials on a topic, author, or genre specified by the educator. Digital classroom resources include Scholastic Teachables, thousands of ready-to-go lessons and activities for elementary grades; and Scholastic Bookflix, video storybooks paired with thematically related nonfiction e-books. Teachers may also schedule a behind-the-scenes class tour of their closest library, then enjoy a dedicated Storytime and borrowing.

TECH IT OUT Customers may use their library cards to check out laptops or tablets for use in the library.

TECH TUTORING With the help of library staff and volunteer tutors, customers discover how to use technology to stay digitally connected with friends and family, find needed information, and access digital library collections. Tech Tutoring also provides an important opportunity for our oldest customers to connect with other people in real life.

TEEN LIBRARY CONNECTIONS (TLC)

Teens engage with one another and help with library programs while earning community service hours. Groups meet monthly at six library locations.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP DCL offers classes twice each year to help prepare those seeking to obtain U.S. Citizenship. In addition, DCL partners with the USCIS department to host an annual naturalization ceremony at a library location.

VARIED INTERIOR SPACES Agati pods and alone-together seating, and other inventive and original seating options allow customers to discover their favorite spot in the library. Whether it's a quiet reading nook, state-of-the-art computer bank, or multimedia-equipped meeting room, DCL provides many premium choices.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION We formally show our gratitude to our hundreds of volunteers by inviting them to special, after-hours Forest of Stories viewing parties, complete with refreshments, activities, and gifts. These events are in addition to myriad informal thank-yous we extend throughout the year, in person and via email.

YOUR LUCKY DAY ITEMS (YLD) YLD items are copies of very popular titles that do not fill holds, but are placed in the libraries for customers to browse. These items are labeled with a green shamrock, are available first come, first served, and are not renewable.

YOUTH SPONSORSHIPS DCL partners with local organizations that serve kids participating in school, sports, the arts, and other activities, to display our logo and vision to youth and the people who support them: parents, guardians, grandparents, and other extended family. This work creates millions of opportunities for community members to see DCL in their neighborhoods, even when they are not interacting directly with the library.