

Green Mountain Library Consortium 2025 Annual Report

During the period of this annual report (May 1, 2024, to April 30, 2025) the GMLC Board has been evaluating several of our services to member libraries and considering the pros and cons, such as relevance and affordability, of adding others. We added a new streaming service, Biblio+, in September, to meet the increasing demand for streaming content. To help alleviate some of the frustration from users of our Overdrive/Libby Digital Collection (LUV), we raised fees for the first time in many years to buy more content and reduce holds. Internally, we have changed some of our financial partners, and in the spring of 2025 the full GMLC Board took on the management of VOKAL. Several meetings were held to reorganize committees and bring in new people to help lead VOKAL and support VOKAL member libraries. Finally, in April, we took over the fees for the statewide SWANK Movie License, formerly supported by VTLIB. We are currently researching a model to share the cost of this service with participating libraries who enjoy showing movies.

As always, we are proud of our work and appreciate the endless hours of our many volunteers. Our mission is *“To provide Vermont's libraries with access to goods and services otherwise unattainable through the power of partnerships and collective purchasing.* This is summed up in the consortium's tagline: **Vermont Libraries, Working Together.**

Here are the reports on our various projects.

LUV

Our statistics show that from April 30, 2024, to May 1, 2025, LUV patrons checked out 809,440 total digital items consisting of 259,590 eBooks and 506,992 audio books and 42,737 magazines from our collection of 57,648 items. This represents an increase of 10.7 % over last year's circulation. As of May 2025, there are 34,628 Vermonters who use the LUV digital library, an increase of over 3900 users (or 12.8 %) from the previous year. Clearly, Vermonters enjoy their digital library collection more and more each year.

Mango Languages

Mango use is growing every year. There are currently 31 GMLC libraries enrolled in the Mango Languages service with 8667 individual users. From April 2024 to May 2025, there were 9876 sessions which represents a 48% increase from last year, which was a 40% increase from the year before. Of these, 52% were web sessions and 48% were on mobile devices.

Just like last year, Spanish/Latin American, French, German and Italian were the most popular languages, followed by Japanese, Portuguese/Brazilian, Russian and English.

Biblio+

GMLC added the video streaming service Biblio+ in September of 2024. As an example of how patrons are using the service, here are some statistics from the week of May 2 – 9, 2025:

Views: 302 / average per day: 38

Patron sign-ups: 21 / average per day: 3

Active users: 140 / average per day: 18

Number of hrs. watched: 156 hrs.

VOKAL

We now have 72 libraries and branches in VOKAL! As VOKAL makes some transitions, we will be pausing adding new member libraries.

With Aspen we are utilizing a development we sponsored for local hold groups: Multiple libraries can set parameters for their patrons to place holds on items at other libraries within the group. This has been very popular with the HomeCard group within Koha.

This year begins the transition to a new generation of library staff volunteers to take on the mantle of running VOKAL. We are looking for new committee

members and will be tapping into more experienced staff to help take more of a leadership role in established committees, including the Executive Committee that guides all things VOKAL. This past year, one Executive Committee member has left, and another will be leaving by the end of 2025.

We expect that the rest of the year will bring many new faces with new ideas on VOKAL committees. Getting more involved in VOKAL committees is a rewarding experience, and an excellent way to meet Vermont library colleagues, and deepen your knowledge of the Vermont library landscape and how to share a dynamic system with a range of libraries.

GMLC- Listen UP VT spending 2024-2025

Total Budget: \$195,900.00

\$48,975.00 per quarter

Audio \$117,540.00- 60% of budget

eBooks \$78,360.00- 40% of budget

The 2024-2025 budget was divided up as follows:

	60%	40%	
	AUDIO	EBOOKS	TOTAL
15% Youth- Hannah	\$ 17,631.00	\$ 11,754.00	\$29,385.00
30% Adult Fic- Lisa M.	\$ 35,262.00	\$ 23,508.00	\$58,770.00
10% Non-fic- Mara	\$ 11,754.00	\$ 7,836.00	\$19,590.00
10% Extra copies- Lisa	\$ 11,754.00	\$ 7,836.00	\$19,590.00
15% Expired Content- Susanna	\$ 17,631.00	\$ 11,754.00	\$29,385.00

20% Patron requests- Hannah	\$ 23,508.00	\$ 15,672.00	\$39,180.00
TOTAL	\$117,540.00	\$78,360.00	\$195,900.00

June 2025: All funds for FY 2024-2025 have been spent.

2024-2025 Budget. Breakdown of purchases:

Selector	AUDIO	EBOOKS	AMOUNT SPENT	BUDGET	AMOUNT REMAINING
15% Youth- Hannah	\$ 17,633.66	\$ 11,743.28	\$29,376.94	\$ 29,385.00	\$ 8.06
30% Adult Fic- Lisa M.	\$ 35,726.29	\$ 23,038.58	\$58,764.87	\$ 58,770.00	\$ 5.13
10% Non-fic- Mara	\$ 11,750.21	\$7,877.22	\$19,627.43	\$ 19,590.00	\$ (37.43)
10% Extra copies- Lisa	\$ 11,978.16	\$ 7,608.12	\$19,586.28	\$ 19,590.00	\$ 3.72
15% Expired Content- Susanna	\$ 16,733.57	\$ 12,649.77	\$29,383.34	\$ 29,385.00	\$ 1.66
20% Patron requests- Hannah	\$ 23,160.20	\$ 16,044.47	\$39,204.67	\$ 39,180.00	\$ (24.67)
FINAL NUMBERS	\$116,982.09	\$78,961.44	\$195,943.53	\$195,900.00	\$(43.53)

# OF COPIES PURCHASED			
Budget Allotment	AUDIO	EBOOKS	TOTAL
15% Youth- Hannah	1577	1615	3192
30% Adult Fic- Lisa M.	1527	746	2273
10% Non-fic- Hannah/Mara	425	213	638
10% Extra copies- Lisa	1969	190	2159
15% Expired Content- Susanna	6964	2198	9162
20% Patron requests- Hannah	3266	1800	5066
TOTAL # OF COPIES	15728	6762	22490

Wherever appropriate, we purchase the Metered Access: 100 concurrent users” model as it allows 100 people to check out at the same time. It does count as 100 copies and therefore inflates the number of copies. While expensive, it quickly reduces the number of holds.

ADDITIONAL MONIES

No additional monies to report on this year.

REPORTS FROM SELECTORS

Hannah Peacock

Burnham Memorial Library

SELECTOR FOR: YOUTH AND REQUESTS/HEAD OF SELECTION COMMITTEE

There is simply not enough money to satisfy the increasing high demand for both eBooks and audiobooks. The hold times are long, and we can't buy all the new and exciting titles that are available to order. We are forced to delete expired titles that still have numerous holds on them as there is simply not enough money to re-purchase everything. Please refer to Susanna's report to see more information about holds. Spoiler alert- we can only afford to buy a new copy when there are 20 holds! This number has doubled since last year.

There are some solutions to this problem. We could actively try to seek out additional funds- grants, donations, etc. We are all volunteers though and adding something else to our plates does seem daunting.

We are also still finding that many Advantage libraries are still not sharing copies with the consortium once their patrons no longer have holds. I don't think people are unwilling to share; I think it's more a matter of not knowing how to do it. Please have a look at Lisa's report about the benefits of sharing titles. We did offer training on this with the Overdrive folks, but I think this may need to be something we offer on a regular basis.

These issues will certainly be discussed at upcoming GMLC Board meetings as well as at meetings with membership. Let us know if you have ideas!

My approach to purchasing in my 2 selections areas remains largely the same as in previous years.

For "Requests" or additional copies, I still look at holds ratio, notify me tags, expired copies that still have holds, new titles that are popular in my library, popular titles we may have missed, older titles that are having a resurgence (movie tie-in, book club buzz, etc.), and new titles of all genres that I think will work well on our platform. The difference this year is that I must be more cutthroat than ever. I must weigh all the options and make hard decisions. I feel that I buy fewer new titles as the number of holds on existing titles is already so large. I know that Lisa will get the newest popular titles, but she is facing similar struggles, and it was nice when I had extra money to pitch in. I do buy as many of the "100 concurrent users" model as possible as it immediately reduces the overall holds ratio.

Youth books- buying youth books is easier for me because there are fewer holds. I get to use my collection development skills more in this area as I am not constantly trying to stay ahead of the holds, except for a few incredibly popular teen authors and series. Circulation

of juvenile and YA books is high, but they are less likely to place holds or notify me tags on titles.

Please be in touch with any questions or ideas.

Hannah Peacock

hpeacock@colchestervt.gov

Lisa Milchman

Norwich Public Library

MANAGES: ADULT FICTION & EXTRA COPIES OF HIGH DEMAND TITLES

As I was finishing up ordering for FY 24-25, I noted to a colleague that over the course of the year I had spent approximately \$78,000 buying content for LUV, just for my areas! It felt in that moment like a large amount of money – and it is – yet still a drop in the bucket in terms of the appetite of LUV patrons for content. For perspective, the year I became a selector, FY 13-14, the total LUV budget was \$53,500 (which I believe included a stipend of \$10,000 from the Vermont DOL for ebooks – which was then the newer format.)

Since those days, over a decade ago, one of the biggest changes, which Susanna addressed in her report, and certainly the biggest complaint that I hear (as I am sure we all do!) is the long wait times. For my part, I try to front load with extra copies of those titles which are sure to be popular. This is easier to do for e-books which tend to be licensed on less expensive models than e-audio titles. Through my lurking on various library-related social media channels, I have noted that we are certainly not alone in this being a major complaint of patrons country-wide. Understandably, users don't understand why this is the case. While it is unlikely that the holds situation will improve, perhaps as a consortium we can figure out a way to explain to patrons and member libraries, the financial constrictions we operate under, due to these (often unreasonable) licensing models. In terms of collection development, the perpetual challenge is to strike a balance to order what more 'vocal' patrons want (Romantasy as a subgenre lead all requested titles in fiction!) and continuing to provide offerings for everyone – including lesser-known and less popular titles in a wide-range of sub-genres. While the fiction collection is more weighted towards popular titles, my hope is that patrons can find something less popular (and just as entertaining) while waiting for their holds.

The good news, I believe, is that we are fortunate in the current political climate, to be in the vast minority of states that have an Overdrive service not funded by our state library. While economic realities or uncertainties at individual member libraries may still affect us as a consortium – e. g. Advantage purchasing – we are undoubtedly in a more stable position. The availability of Palace aside, I call this to my patrons' attention all the time when they assume that downloadable content through the library is in danger of going away. YAY GMLC!

Thank you as always, for the privilege of being your fiction selector. I am always happy to hear from librarians, local authors, or from patrons of LUV. I can be reached at lisa.milchman@norwichlibrary.org

Susanna Kahn

Charlotte Library

MANAGES: EXPIRED METERED CONTENT/HIGH HOLDS

There are almost 7,000 titles on hold right now! An increasing number of titles have moved to the 12 month or 24 month model, so there are a lot of titles that expire each month. I work on balancing the expired titles with holds with titles in the collection that have a high hold ratio. With expired titles, a new copy is purchased if there are 20 or more holds. With current titles, I purchase copies of the older titles with the dream of keeping the holds ratio at 20 or below (Lisa purchases extra copies for the recent titles). More titles are being offered as 100 concurrent checkouts and I purchase those when possible to meet the holds demand quickly. Unfortunately, the budget does not come close to easing the burden on high holds and expired titles and there are almost 400 titles with a holds ratio over 20.

Holdings breakdown

- All Holds: 6967
- Titles owned by Advantage members: 3357
- Titles shared through Advantage Plus: 672
- Titles not/no longer owned by consortium that one or more Advantage member owns: 655
- Titles shared that are not owned by consortium: 167

Thank you to all the libraries that make their copies available through Advantage Plus. Sharing these titles frees up consortium funds to shorten

other hold lists. The sharing library's copy is still prioritized for their patrons on the hold list, so it does not negatively impact their patrons.

Additionally, I've also been working on cleaning up the collection by weeding expired titles that have few holds or have been expired for quite a while. The holds are then deleted by the Overdrive team. Expired titles with no holds are automatically weeded from the collection. Advantage copies remain when a consortium copy is weeded.

Please be in touch if you have any questions or suggestions:
susanna@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Mara Siegel
MANAGES: ADULT NON-FICTION

No Report submitted

Annual Report respectfully submitted by:

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