

# ANNUAL REPORT

Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library

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Credit: Indiana Nash, The Daily Gazette







Book sales are highly anticipated by the community and enjoyed by our volunteers — they are great events for socializing and meeting supporters



Enjoying a tour and meal in Poland



Friends of the Library was selected as one of the recipients of the Good News Awards from the Chamber of Schenectady County



The Friends enjoyed a spring trip to Charleston, Savannah, and Jekyll Island



The Friends were finally able to embark on their Poland tour, postponed several times since 2020

# President's Report



Charlene Roman

# Reflections on 2023, a productive year for the Friends of the Library

The Friends of the SCPL had a very busy and productive year!

One of the highlights of 2023 was the Friends receiving the Good News Award from the Chamber of Schenectady County. The Good News Awards honor businesses, organizations and individuals in Schenectady County for exceptional growth; a new or renovated building; celebration of a significant anniversary; demonstrating extraordinary community support; launching a unique product or service in the past year; or just being a true success story. Relocating the Whitney Book Corner and remaining in downtown Schenectady was a good decision in order to provide the community with affordable used books and support the library. Several board members attended the luncheon to accept the award, which is displayed in the library.

We had our first annual meeting in person since before COVID. It was held at the Turf Tavern and officers and board members were elected. A delicious buffet was served and it enabled people an opportunity to catch up and visit with everyone.

The Friends expanded the use of Little Green Light, a software program that has made renewing and maintaining memberships so much easier. Please visit the Friends website for more information.

In late fall, we weathered a two-month shutdown of the loading dock at the Central Library, which prohibited book donations. Without any books to sort, the teams had some time off. Each book that is donated to the Friends is sorted by fiction/non-fiction, quality and potential online value. The stores and online sales remained open, but the stock did start thinning by the end of the second month. Fortunately, donations have been robust.

After two postponements, the Friends were finally able to embark on the Discover Poland trip, which was very successful as all had a wonderful time! The Friends also traveled to Charleston, Savannah, and Jekyll Island.

The Great Decisions program, a weekly discussion group at the library, continued with a good following. The books for the program were sold at the Whitney.

The book sales in February, May and September were very successful, generating revenue of over \$42,000. Online sales were also robust, bringing in over \$40,000.

The Junior Friends (teenagers 13-17) program was revived with Maria Norelli as the chair. The Juniors have volunteered on many occasions, working at both stores by culling books and covering shifts, and the book sales.

The Friends have made great progress in the last year by updating policies, procedures and by-laws in order to improve communication and cooperation throughout the organization.

The Friends of the SCPL uses proceeds from the stores and sales to support library programming and operations. The Friends board members are dedicated to preserving the organization in order to continue providing support for a much-needed and valued community asset.

2023 had its challenges, but we overcame them to forge a much stronger organization. A huge thank you goes out to all of the dedicated volunteers for working so hard to make us one of the premier Friends groups in New York State!



# **Book Stores**

# Whitney Book Corner and A Second Look

Both stores did well in 2023. A Second Look expanded its hours and is now open seven days a week. The most popular items sold were children's books (2966). The Whitney Book Corner's most popular item was adult fiction (2874). The two stores brought in over \$88,000.

We continue to attract new customers to both stores who find us through local groups, library branches, social media, and Google searches. We also continue to have a very loyal base who visits regularly.

At Whitney Book Corner, we have partnered with Oakroom Artists to display a revolving set of art for sale. This initiative has brought in new customers as well and generates interest in Whitney Book Corner for both art and books.

- Charlene Roman





Art display with Barb Lennox of Oakroom Artists at Whitney Book Corner















Book sales continue to be the Fri event, with the community often Many patrons donate the change separate donation.





ends' most highly anticipated purchasing books by the bagful. from their purchases or make a

### **Book Sales**

#### Successful events in 2023

We all agree that 2023 was a very successful year for our book sales. We held our usual three sales, winter, spring, and fall.

All the sales went well. The fall sale was "interrupted" by Schenectady's EV (electric vehicle) fair on Sunday. The sale attendance was unaffected and the total income was up from the previous year.

The team tries to improve each sale by using feedback from the customers and the volunteers. All the hard work does pay off, total book sale income for the year was \$42,551.52.

But the team doesn't do all the hard work just for the money — we do it for the satisfaction of knowing we are helping to better the community.

Lisa Esperti



# Membership

# Memberships and Continued Integration with Little Green Light

In September, the Friends of SCPL went live with Little Green Light's webforms. This enabled us to include online forms on our website to allow for electronic memberships, renewals, gifts, and donation submissions.

In October, the Membership Team announced the change to all membership terms, moving all members to a January through December term.

#### 2023 Membership Roll-up

Description	Total Number					
New Memberships	84					
New Junior Memberships	26					
Renewals	406					

#### **Electronic Memberships, Renewals, Gifts Stats**

Description	Total Number
New Memberships	22
New Junior Memberships	17
Renewals	74
Auto-Renewal sign-ups	19
Donations	3

— Jessicca McDonald & Norrine Thompson



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# **Junior Friends Program**

#### **Program for Students Ages 13 to 18**

The Junior Friends is back! In 2023, we restarted the program for students ages 13 to 18 and currently has 34 members across several schools in Schenectady County. The Junior Friends is a great way for students to earn the required volunteer hours for school. Members have actively participated in the book sales, assisted at the bookstores, and with special projects.

Two of our Junior Friends who are students at Niskayuna High School held a young adult-focused book drive at the high school. Using social media and print promotional material, the effort ran for two weeks, collecting 130 books which were then sold at Whitney Book Corner and A Second Look.

One Junior Friend partnered with the Central Library to create the Peer Partnership Support Program, a library program focused on reading help for students in grades K-3. In conjunction with Niskayuna High School's National Honor Society, students were available to provide 45 minutes of assistance twice per week.

We look forward to continuing our work in 2024 and expanding to assist in all facets of the Friends mission. Stay tuned!

- Maria Norelli







# Community Outreach

#### Supporting local organizations in need

The newly formed Friends Community Outreach Committee held its inaugural meeting November 18. The committee continued to meet throughout the year and has focused efforts around scholarships for Schenectady County high school seniors and building libraries for organizations in need.

Eight schools in Schenectady County are eligible to select one graduating student from each to receive the \$1000 Friends of Schenectady Public Library Scholarship: Duanesburg, Mekeel Christian Academy, Rotterdam-Mohonasen, Niskayuna, Notre Dame Bishop Gibbons, Schalmont, Schenectady, and Scotia-Glenville. The criteria for the scholarship is that students attend an accredited two-year or four-year college or university. Student candidates must demonstrate strong academic commitment and effort, a commitment to service or volunteerism, leadership, a passion for reading, and have an interest in a library or teaching career. Some of the schools are extending an invitation for the Friends to participate in their awards ceremonies.

Our Building Libraries through Outreach initiative has assigned liaisons from the committee to help support using The Friends' resources to create and/or expand an organization's library. We are currently providing resources to Sunnyview Hospital, Bridges of Schenectady, Street Soldiers of Schenectady, and Ellis Medicine Comfort Cart. In addition, we are working to expand these efforts to Schenectady County nursing homes, senior centers, and other care giving organizations.

The committee members include co-chairs Mark Mattis and Diane Wilkinson, Shirley DeBono, Maggie French, Carol Hyde, Maria Norelli, Melissa Precopia, Charlene Roman and Mary Rosen.

- Diane Wilkinson



Donating books to Bridges of Schenectady to build a library at the facility



Patient Comfort Care cart at Ellis Medicine



# Beat the Snow Winter Concert Series

#### **Sundays in the McChesney Room**

The Beat the Snow Concert Series was again a successful endeavor. Our audiences have been loyal and enthusiastic. Even our reference librarian mentioned that he knows if there is a concert because of the number of people entering the library is much increased.

The series began with a Holiday-sing-along with Malcolm Kogut with support by Thomas Gerbino, a local woodwind player. The series was well supported by many long-time participants such as Musicians of Maalwyck, Donald Hyman, Mark Tommasone, Bien Baez, Rosanne Hargrave, and Michael Clement, and several young talented performers.

The young players are organized by the Young Musicians Forum. Newer groups included Musicats Duo, Act Two, Michael Benedict Jazz Vibes, and barber shop singers, The Forgettable Four. WE THANK ALL THE MUSICIANS!

And since our organizer, Janice Walz, had a Sunday rehearsal for a Galway Theater production, Gareth Griffith shouldered the yeoman's duty of getting the chairs in place. Shows were recorded by Jacob Bailey — watch for re-runs later in the year.

— Janice Walz





# Online Sales

# Continued High Performance on Amazon and eBay

Our great team continued its fine work through 2023, and we maintain our 5-star Amazon seller rating, and eBay Top seller rating. Fortunately, we continue to receive quality donations from the community and the library to add to our inventory.

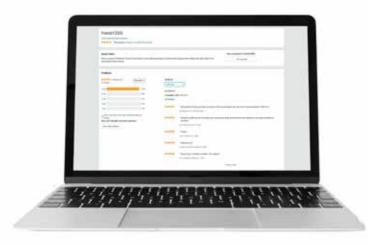
The highlight of the year was the success our move from selling DVDs on eBay to selling books, as DVDs lost value on the market. Judy Stevens made the changeover capably, without affecting our top seller rating. We have adjusted our inventory space to accommodate more books for eBay.

Mary Trivilino retired in the fall from her job of more than 15 years with the online team. We were saddened, but very grateful, for the thousands of books she has listed over the years. Mariah Lasher had to leave us as Friday shipper in December. Jenna Dragoo joined us as Saturday shipper. Robin Raley helped on Mondays from the fall until Christmas.

Our shippers sent out just over 2,000 orders, despite losing some time to library construction, and a December holiday vacation for Amazon shippers.

The team scanned more than 40,000 items, and researched dozens of carts of books. We added to and managed an Amazon inventory of about 3100 items, and continued to sell from inventory during the hiatus in donations in the fall. Judy Stevens increased our eBay inventory from our limited test of the book market there to about 1000 items.

— Valerie Catlin and Shawn Schultz





# Newsletters & Online Presence

# Promoting the Friends and Bookstores

The new website designs that were introduced in 2022 performed well in 2023, bringing more visitors — and, therefore, attention — to the Friends organization and both bookstores.

More than 12,000 users visited the Friends website, searching for information about book sales, donations, events, membership, and volunteer opportunities.

The bookstores' website (www.whitneybookcorner.org) performs well locally, bringing in new customers to both stores. Updated profiles on Yelp, the business review website, have also contributed to increased visitor traffic to the website and stores.

Email marketing also increased in 2023, promoting book sales, in-store sales, events, membership, and volunteer opportunities. This has proven to be an effective complement to print ads.

We increased our Facebook and Instagram postings in 2023, introducing a strategy of promoting current inventory available at both stores. This has been effective for current releases and unique children's books, which sell quickly and buyers have commented they saw the books in a post.

The Friends continue to produce a printed newsletter five times per year that is mailed to more than 300 members and also available at all libraries and both bookstores. Even in this digital age, printed media continues to be an important component for communication and promotion of the Friends' mission.

- Sharon Zalewski



Sale ad promoted on social media



Children's books promoted on social media



# **Financial Reports**

#### Friends Balance Sheet Comparison

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Total checking and savings accounts were \$540,340 as of December 31, 2023, up about \$42,000 (+8.5%) from 2022. During 2023, we moved \$300,000 into two certificates of deposit in order to take advantage of higher interest rates.

Total equity as of December 31, 2023 was \$570,373 and was about \$46,000 (+8.7%) higher than the previous year.

#### Friends Profit & Loss Comparison

Total regular income was \$235,040 as of December 31, 2023 and was roughly \$31,000 (+15%) higher than the 2022 level. Contributions (including memberships), and gifts and memorial contributions, were up nearly \$14,000. Sales at A Second Look accounted for about \$11,000 of the overall increase. Book sale income was up nearly \$6,000.

Total expenses were \$194,071 and were about \$2,400 (+1%) above the 2022 level. Spending for Children and Young Adult programming and supplies was up, while spending for Adult programs and supplies was down.

When other income of \$4,000 (Metroplex rent subsidy) is added, total net income for 2023 was \$44,970, compared to \$15,355 in 2022.

#### The Finance Team

Shirley DeBono (Vice President), Jess McDonald (Assistant Treasurer), Anne McCoy (Membership), and Kelly Walker (Bookkeeper) are due special thanks for depositing and managing the monies, and paying the bills, all with good cheer.

- Charlie Richardson, Treasurer



12:28 PM 03/30/24 Cash Basis

# Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library Balance Sheet Prev Year Comparison

As of December 31, 2023

	D	ec 31, 23	D	ec 31, 22	\$ Change	% Change
ASSETS						
Current Assets						
Checking/Savings						
Money Market Accounts						
Berkshire Bank Money Market	\$	44,989	\$	340,335	\$ (295,347)	-86.8%
Berkshire CD	\$	252,075	\$	-	\$ 252,075	100.0%
Berkshire Checking	\$	1,000	\$	-	\$ 1,000	100.0%
Saratoga Certificate of Deposit	\$	50,000	\$	-	\$ 50,000	100.0%
Saratoga National Bank & Trust	\$	121,327	\$	107,116	\$ 14,211	13.3%
<b>Total Money Market Accounts</b>	\$	469,391	\$	447,451	\$ 21,940	4.9%
Saratoga Friends Account	\$	56,665	\$	37,152	\$ 19,512	52.5%
Saratoga Library Staff Account	\$	6,728	\$	4,873	\$ 1,854	38.1%
Saratoga Square Account	\$	7,157	\$	8,019	\$ (862)	-10.8%
WBC Cash Register	\$	400	\$	400	\$ -	0.0%
Total Checking/Savings	\$	540,340	\$	497,896	\$ 42,444	8.5%
Other Current Assets						
Security Deposit WBC	\$	2,000	\$	2,000	\$ -	0.0%
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	\$	2,000	\$	2,000	\$ -	0.0%
Total Current Assets	\$	542,340	\$	499,896	\$ 42,444	8.5%
Fixed Assets						
Leasehold Improvement	\$	44,700	\$	44,700	\$ -	0.0%
Total Fixed Assets	\$	44,700	\$	44,700	\$ -	0.0%
Other Assets						
<b>Bulk Postage Permit Account</b>	\$	125	\$	370	\$ (245)	-66.2%
Postage Due Acct	\$	213	\$	218	\$ (5)	-2.3%
Total Other Assets	\$	338	\$	588	\$ (250)	-42.6%
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	587,378	\$	545,184	\$ 42,194	7.7%
LIABILITIES & EQUITY						
Liabilities						
Current Liabilities						
Other Current Liabilities						
Deferred Rent Grant	\$	13,333	\$	17,333	\$ (4,000)	-23.1%
Gift Cards	\$	3,073	\$	2,415	\$ 658	27.2%
Sales Tax Payable NYS	\$	598	\$	617	\$ (20)	-3.2%
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$	17,004	\$	20,366	\$ (3,362)	-16.5%
Total Current Liabilities	\$	17,004	\$	20,366	\$ (3,362)	-16.5%
Total Liabilities	\$	17,004	\$	20,366	\$ (3,362)	-16.5%
Equity						
Book Sales Fund	\$	40	\$	-	\$ 40	100.0%
Gilbert Endowmnt Fnd Restrict	\$	1,000	\$	1,000	\$ -	0.0%
Love-Jatulis Charitable Gift	\$	1,000	\$	1,000	\$ -	0.0%
Music Fund	\$	11,290	\$	11,290	\$ -	0.0%
Niskayuna Landscape Fund	\$	1,180	\$	634	\$ 546	86.1%
Woodlawn Fund	\$	1,305	\$	1,305	\$ -	0.0%
3900 · Retained Earnings	\$	509,590	\$	494,235	\$ 15,355	3.1%
Net Income	\$	44,970	\$	15,355	\$ 29,615	192.9%
Total Equity	\$		\$		\$ 45,556	8.7%
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$	587,378	\$	545,184	\$ 42,194	7.7%

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### Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison

– 2023 Annual Report

January	through	December	2023
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	la	n Dog 22	lon	- Dec 22	¢	Change	% Change
Ordinant Incomo/Evnance	Ja	n - Dec 23	Jan	- Dec 22	Ð,	Change	% Change
Ordinary Income/Expense							
Income							
BookSale Income  Bulk Recycle Sales for Booksale	Ф.		¢	680	φ	(690)	100.00/
•		- 40 EE0	\$		\$	(680)	-100.0%
BookSale Income - Other	\$	42,552	\$	36,024	\$	6,527	18.1%
Total BookSale Income	\$	42,552	\$	36,704	\$	5,847	15.9%
Contributions	•	404	•	0.40	•	(53)	00.00/
Contributions - Book Bags	\$	191	\$	248	\$	(57)	-23.0%
Contributions - Membership	•	(00)	•		•	(00)	400.00/
Stripe Fee	\$	(83)	\$	-	\$	(83)	-100.0%
Contributions - Membership		23,530	\$	17,449	\$	6,081	34.9%
Total Contributions - Membershi		23,446	\$	17,449	\$	5,997	34.4%
Contributions - Other	\$	11,331	\$	3,614	\$	7,717	213.5%
Total Contributions	\$	34,969	\$	21,311	\$	13,657	64.1%
Friends trips	\$	7,798	\$	7,415	\$	384	5.2%
GE Match	\$	-	\$	200	\$	(200)	-100.0%
Gifts/Memorial Contributions	\$	5,438	\$	2,034	\$	3,404	167.4%
Interest & Dividends	\$	7,940	\$	954	\$	6,986	732.6%
MVLS Grant	\$	3,150	\$	4,450	\$	(1,300)	-29.2%
On line sales Amazon	\$	29,465	\$	36,871	\$	(7,406)	-20.1%
Online FB Marketplace	\$	-	\$	85	\$	(85)	-100.0%
Online Sales Ebay	\$	9,910	\$	4,918	\$	4,992	101.5%
Star Grant	\$	12,800	\$	18,882	\$	(6,082)	-32.2%
300 · 2nd Look Sales							
Square Fee's	\$	(817)	\$	(610)	\$	(208)	-34.0%
300.1 · Sales	\$	44,051	\$	33,156	\$	10,895	32.9%
Total 300 · 2nd Look Sales	\$	43,234	\$	32,546	\$	10,687	32.8%
301 · Whitney Book Corner Sales							
Square Fees	\$	(709)	\$	(683)	\$	(26)	-3.8%
301.1 · Sales	\$	38,495	\$	38,659	\$	(164)	-0.4%
Total 301 · Whitney Book Corner S	a <u>\$</u>	37,786	\$	37,975	\$	(189)	-0.5%
Total Income	\$	235,040	\$	204,345	\$	30,696	15.0%
Gross Profit	\$	235,040	\$	204,345	\$	30,696	15.0%
Expense							
Accounting Review	\$	1,300	\$	1,200	\$	100	8.3%
Bank Service Charge	\$	-	\$	2	\$	(2)	-100.0%
Bookkeeping Services	\$	10,725	\$	12,738	\$	(2,013)	-15.8%
BookSale Expenses							
Equipment, Book Sales	\$	269	\$	-	\$	269	100.0%
Publicity, Book Sales	\$	260	\$	870	\$	(610)	-70.1%
Square Fees, Book sales	\$	175	\$	65	\$	110	168.4%
Supplies, Book sales	\$	498	\$	-	\$	498	100.0%
BookSale Expenses - Other	\$		\$	519	\$	(519)	-100.0%
Total BookSale Expenses	\$	1,201	\$	1,454	\$	(253)	-17.4%
Flash Drives & Ear Buds	\$	1,079	\$	145	\$	934	642.7%
Friends Programs and Events							
Beat the Snow	\$	2,200	\$	2,800	\$	(600)	-21.4%
Harry Potter Event	\$	-	\$	728	\$	(728)	-100.0%
Friends Programs and Events - 0	<b>)</b> \$	275	\$	-	\$	275	100.0%
Total Friends Programs and Events	\$	2,475	\$	3,528	\$	(1,053)	-29.8%
Friends Trips Expenses	\$	7,626	\$	6,030	\$	1,596	26.5%
Great Books Program	\$	573	\$	869	\$	(296)	-34.0%
Hospitality	\$	475	\$	-	\$	475	100.0%
Insurance	\$	1,475	\$	1,458	\$	17	1.2%
Legal Fee's	\$	-	\$	752	\$	(752)	-100.0%
Membership	\$	845	\$	1,816	\$	(972)	-53.5%
Memorials/Gifts Expense	\$	-	\$	50	\$	(50)	-100.0%
Miscellaneous .	\$	418	\$	2,000	\$	(1,582)	-79.1%
Museum Pass Program	\$	-	\$	900	\$	(900)	-100.0%
MVLS Expenses	\$	1,595	\$	3,745	\$	(2,150)	-57.4%

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#### Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison January through December 2023

	Jan	- Dec 23	Jan	- Dec 22	\$ Change	% Change
Newsletter	\$	3,127	\$	2,796	\$ 332	11.9%
Online Book Sales						
Online Sales PayPal/Ebay Fees	\$	908	\$	350	\$ 558	159.3%
Postage	\$	5,521	\$	4,327	\$ 1,194	27.6%
Online Book Sales - Other	\$	1,492	\$	3,653	\$ (2,161)	-59.2%
Total Online Book Sales	\$	7,920	\$	8,330	\$ (410)	-4.9%
Other	\$	652	\$	2,184	\$ (1,533)	-70.2%
Piano	\$	280	\$	960	\$ (680)	-70.8%
Postage	\$	732	\$	528	\$ 204	38.7%
Program Supplies, Adult						
Program Support Postage	\$	10	\$	48	\$ (39)	-80.1%
Program Supplies, Adult - Other	\$	5,566	\$	22,912	\$ (17,346)	-75.7%
Total Program Supplies, Adult	\$	5,575	\$	22,960	(17,385)	-75.7%
Program Supplies, Children-YA	\$	18,077	\$	9,511	\$ 8,567	90.1%
Program Support - Publicity	\$	9,866	\$	5,807	\$ 4,059	69.9%
Program Support Spec Circ Items	\$	6,927	\$	5,805	\$ 1,122	19.3%
Programs, Adults	\$	15,072	\$	24,143	\$ (9,071)	-37.6%
Programs, Children-YA	\$	26,349	\$	17,753	\$ 8,597	48.4%
Publicity	\$	4,143	\$	3,670	\$ 473	12.9%
Staff Development	\$	7,751	\$	3,067	\$ 4,684	152.8%
STARS	\$	21,699	\$	16,416	\$ 5,283	32.2%
Treasurer's Supplies	\$	944	\$	708	\$ 235	33.2%
Volunteer Events	\$	-	\$	431	\$ (431)	-100.0%
500 · 2nd Look Expenses						
Rent 2nd Look	\$	6,000	\$	6,000	\$ -	0.0%
Supplies	\$	365	\$	176	\$ 188	106.8%
Telephone 2nd Look	\$	894	\$	790	\$ 104	13.2%
Total 500 · 2nd Look Expenses	\$	7,259	\$	6,967	\$ 293	4.2%
501 · Whitney Book Corner Expense						
Maintenance	\$	175	\$	638	\$ (463)	-72.5%
Rent WBC	\$	21,600	\$	19,350	\$ 2,250	11.6%
Supplies WBC	\$	1,727	\$	824	\$ 903	109.6%
Telephone WBC	\$	570	\$	604	\$ (34)	-5.7%
Utilities WBC	\$	3,841	\$	1,521	\$ 2,320	152.6%
Total 501 · Whitney Book Corner Ex		27,913	\$	22,937	\$ 4,976	21.7%
Total Expense	\$	194,071		191,657	\$ 2,414	1.3%
Net Ordinary Income	\$	40,970	\$	12,688	\$ 28,281	222.9%
Other Income/Expense						
Other Income						
MetroPlex Rent Subsidy WBC	\$	4,000	\$	2,667	\$ 1,333	50.0%
Total Other Income	\$	4,000	\$	2,667	\$ 1,333	50.0%
Net Other Income	\$	4,000	\$	2,667	\$ 1,333	50.0%
Net Income	\$	44,970	\$	15,355	\$ 29,615	192.9%



