



FAQ:

Location: 5335 Burnet Road
Square footage: 7, 675 sq. feet *
Staff-FTE 3
Year started 2008
Year opened to public 2009

Tonnage per year:

2009: **115** 2010: **88** 2011: **147** 2012: **169** 2013: **192** 2014: **216** 2015: **225**
2016: **303** 2017: **274** 2018: **299**

Revenue per year:

2009: **\$140,300** 2010: **\$180,250** 2011: **\$160,200** 2012: **\$166,150**
2013: **\$165,100** 2014: **\$163,450** 2015: **\$155,165** 2016: **\$154,353**
2017: **\$137,180** 2018: **\$134,010**

(Profit/loss financials prepared by APL finance over last 4 years are attached)

ARR financial support (included in revenue figures above):

2012: **\$29,420** 2013: **\$47,950** 2014: **\$56,430** 2015: **\$60,820** 2016: **\$60,585**
2017: **\$54,715**

Number of items processed 840,000 items annual average
Number of Books sold 150,000 items annual average

Number of Programs offered and average attendance:

Weekly: Untangled Yarners knitting group, average attendance 25 people

Monthly: Open mic poetry and showcase, average attendance, 12 people

Ukestra orchestra, average attendance, 40 people

Quarterly: Fix-it-Clinics (started 2017) average attendance 75 people

Composting and Chicken keeping average attendance 40 people

Special:

Austin International Poetry fest, average attendance 30 people

Random Acts of Harping, average attendance 40 people

Live Music Performances, average attendance 45 people

Reuse crafting programs, average attendance, 20 people

Narrative:

The sale of books both library weeds and donations were handled by the Friends of the Austin Public Library with annual and semi-annual Monster Book Sales since the early 1990s. In 2006 and 2007 the Friends of APL did operate a bookstore out of the post office at 1800 South First Street, which became the location of the Twin Oaks Library branch that opened in 2010.

Over the years, the Friends of APL sorted and prepared materials for sales in the basement of the Faulk Central Library, but needed to vacate that space. The APL administration decided that APL should operate an ongoing retail store. The location at 5335 Burnet Road was selected for the operation. Librarian, Mindy Reed at the Milwood Library branch was selected to manage the bookstore. It was determined that Reed would be the only FTE staff and that the operation would be supported with volunteers.

While envisioned as a used bookstore, it became apparent within months if APL did not have a way to handle the books that couldn't be sold, the operation would grind to a halt. The public was particularly sensitive to books being thrown in the trash and so APL embarked upon a zero landfill approach. Because of our alliance with Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, picking up 20-30 tons of unsold items per month, and finding none dumping alternatives for the materials, we are able to maintain our zero waste goals.

In 2011, Recycled Reads began upcycling. Through crafting and outreach programs we have made everything from folded books centerpieces to flowers, paper bead jewelry to Holiday decorations out of unsellable books and media. That led to other programs from Dreidel Tournaments to music and poetry programs.

APL's commitment to reuse, repurposing, and recycling became a hallmark of the Recycled Reads operation. In 2010, Bob Gedert became the director of Austin Resource Recovery and became the point person for COA's zero waste initiative. He was impressed with APL's commitment to that cause and as such provided a stipend per tonnage diverted until he retired in 2017.

In 2014, a second FTE was added to the Recycled Reads staff. This librarian elevated the reuse activities at the bookstore by showing customers how to make decorative items from books. This spawned a number of reuse programs at the store, including workshops with Austin Creative reuse. Then a third FTE, and administrative assistant came on board.

In 2015, APL received an IMLS grant of \$25,000 to produce training videos to instruct other public libraries on how to run their own reuse, repurposing and recycling bookstore. Those videos can be found on YouTube, entitled Green Weeding Practices. It should be noted that no other public library has duplicated APL's model, citing expense and ordinance barriers.

Over the years, sales and customers have remained stagnant, while incoming materials have increased both from the library branches and public donations. We have responded to the challenge by offering more sustainability programming and opening up the space to develop programs that could be tested out and then exported to the branches.

From its inception, Recycled Reads has not been a financial success with a deficit of approximately \$200,000 each fiscal year and as APL is a non-enterprise department, we have garnered support from COA and the public due to our stated objectives of: maximizing use of APL materials at affordable pricing; support COA's Zero Waste initiative through reuse, repurpose and recycling; and provide worthwhile volunteer opportunities for those interested in supporting APL.