



# 35

*Years*

2021 ANNUAL REPORT  
35TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



**Images on front cover — top row:**

- Year of the Young Reader proclamation. National Library Week 1989 was proclaimed as “The Year of the Young Reader.” The Library of Congress, Berks County Commissioners, and Mayor of Reading issued proclamations.
- Young reader at Boyertown Community Library for National Library Week, 1990.
- Library outreach to Berks Heim residents.
- Former Hamburg Public Library Director, Dan LaRue, 2003.
- Friends of the Brandywine Community Library; Eloise Thomas, Peg Grossman, Carol Nodey.
- Bookasaurus “A Snowy Day” mitten theme, February 2003.

**Images on front cover — bottom row:**

- Camera workshop at the Boone Area Library, 1989.
- Hawk Mountain Sanctuary demonstration for the Kutztown Community Library, July 1989.
- Slapshot, Reading Royals mascot, posing with his book of choice: *Z is for Zamboni*, 2003.
- Painting of the Penn Square Fence in the City of Reading. The fence became a display for the Year of the Young Reader promotion, but gusty winds brought down part of the fence in May 1989.
- Domino challenge, 2003.
- Mrs. Cook’s class; Spanish storytelling at the Reading Public Library’s Northwest branch.



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# A Message from the System Administrator



StoryWalk at the Reading Public Museum's arboretum.

Part of the Berks County Public Libraries' mission is "to meet the ever-changing needs of the people of Berks County." We've become quite familiar with an "ever-changing" environment over these last two years, often addressing changes on a daily basis.

In last year's report, I wrote of the many challenges our libraries faced following the start of the pandemic, and how we responded by adapting library services to fulfill the needs of our communities. While we weathered the storm in 2020 by answering immediate concerns, this was a pivotal year for us as we regained our footing and pushed forward into progress.

We began the year by transitioning Reading Public Library's cataloging responsibilities to the System's Bibliographic Services Department. This change consolidated duplicated services that both organizations used to do; this also streamlined the patron experience by making it easier to find items in the online card catalog.

We expanded the Accessibility and Supportive Learning Collection by adding EnChroma color blind glasses along with other specialty resources. A live reveal event was held in June to introduce the new eyewear into the collection, making Berks County Public Libraries the first institution in Pennsylvania to offer EnChroma color blind glasses free for public use.

Over the summer, the Friends of Berks County Public Libraries and American Association of University Women (AAUW) Reading Branch were able to once again hold the annual Berks Book Bonanza fundraiser after canceling the sale the year prior. Proceeds from the 2021 fundraiser reached over \$100,000, setting the record for the highest sale total to date.



2021 also inspired the creation of several fruitful partnerships between libraries and other community groups. In September, the System worked with the Reading Public Museum to launch a permanent StoryWalk exhibit in the Museum's arboretum.

As we continue to navigate through this challenging time, I look back at what our libraries have accomplished despite the obstacles in front of them, and I am excited to see what the coming year holds in store.

Sincerely,

Amy C. Resh,  
System Administrator  
Berks County Public Libraries

The Berks County Public Libraries (BCPL) System is a department of the County of Berks and serves 411,500 county residents across 866 square miles and 73 municipalities. Through the support of the Berks County commissioners, the Library System staff aids in strengthening the Berks County community by providing centralized support for the 19 full-service, member libraries and four branches. A seven member at-large Advisory Board, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, works in collaboration with member libraries to promote life-long learning and community engagement through resource collections, technology and programming.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of this federated system is to meet the ever-changing needs of the people of Berks County and provide consistent, high-quality, countywide benefits to member libraries through development, coordination and promotion of public library services. Operating as a department of county government and in cooperation with the Reading District Library Center, the System provides leadership and technical assistance for improvement of library services through strengthening of the System's libraries and library resources.

## LIBRARY SYSTEM ADVISORY BOARD

Virginia Hand, President  
Helen Sheimo Flynn, Vice President  
Debbie Noel, Ed.D., Secretary/Treasurer  
Arleny Pimentel  
Charles M. Jones  
Jason Brudereck  
Mary Ellen Wells

## BERKS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Christian Y. Leinbach, Commissioner Chair  
Kevin S. Barnhardt, Commissioner  
Michael S. Rivera, Commissioner



# Library System History

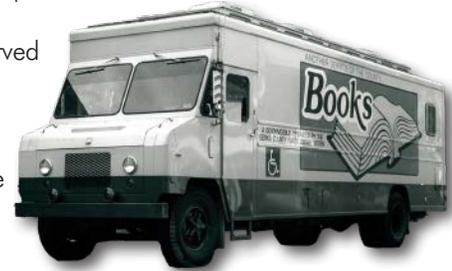
1986

The Berks County Board of Commissioners officially established the Berks County Public Library System (BCPL) to provide a “countywide system of federated libraries and maintain a center for administrative support services.”



1991

When the BCPL System was created in 1986, only 47% of the county’s population was within the service area of a public library. The bookmobile served the remaining 161,000. In 1991, bookmobile operations were transferred from Reading Public Library to BCPL who managed the program until September 2009 when it was taken out of service.



1989

National Library Week 1989 was proclaimed as “The Year of the Young Reader.” The Library of Congress, Berks County Commissioners, and Mayor of Reading issued proclamations.



1996



Dr. Dodson E. Dreisbach wins the System’s first “Dreisbach Award for Exemplary Service” named in his honor. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to public library service development.

his honor. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to public library service development.

1989

## Year of the Young Reader



In April 1989, librarians and System staff made extra efforts to promote early childhood literacy to families around Berks County as part of National Library Week. Numerous events were planned as part of the celebration including the Authors’ Salute which honored nearly 50 of the area’s writers in a gathering sponsored by the Friends of the Reading-Berks Public Libraries. Writers in attendance included Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, Christopher Hinz, Charlie J. Adams III, Cindy Ross, Chet Hagan, and George M. Meiser IX.

There was also a desire to promote the National Library Week theme to parents and children through visual messages. Six billboards were purchased from Penn Advertising to proclaim the “Year of the Young Reader” in and around Reading. And with the help of several students from Albright College, System staff arranged for the plywood fence at Penn Square to be painted in line with the celebration.

National Library Week also recognized the new location of the Village Library on Walnut Street in Morgantown. A sign, constructed by local wood shop and art classes, was placed at the new location with help from Boy Scout Troop #37.



The fence at Penn Square painted as part of the “Year of the Young Reader” theme.

2000

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation awarded grants to the System totaling \$225,500. These funds doubled the number of Internet access points in the libraries to 120 and created a fully-equipped training lab for library staff and the public at Reading Public Library.



2004

Spring Township Library joined the System. It later combined with West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills as part of a two-township merger, bringing System membership to its current total of 19 libraries at 23 locations. Also this year, library budgets were cut due to a 34% reduction in State Aid to Public Libraries.



2001

As part of the System's 15th anniversary, a special bookmobile service was established to serve children in preschool and day care settings. The Bookasaurus began making regular visits in 2002.



2005

The Friends of Berks County Public Libraries led an energetic advocacy effort to increase county funding for library services. The campaign was titled Libraries Rock - Spread the word.

2005

### Libraries Rock - Spread the Word!

In 2004, libraries experienced a drastic funding cut as State Aid to Public Libraries was reduced by 34%. The following year, the Friends of Berks County Public Libraries spearheaded a campaign aimed at increasing Berks County's allocation towards public library. The Libraries Rock! funding campaign adopted Rocky (shown right) as its mascot and could be seen around the county as posters, bookmarks, and bumper stickers.



Design a Bookmark contest submissions.

The Friends orchestrated several contests aimed at motivating library users to spread the word about the importance of libraries and show their support of increased funding. One contest in particular challenged each library to earn points through patron participation. Points would be awarded in increments of 10 for each action taken by that library's patron and could include writing a letter to the editor, radio show call-ins, and volunteering at a Friends' community event booth. The library with the greatest number of points at the end of the contest period would receive \$1,000 from the Friends.

Thanks to the efforts of many, the campaign helped secure a 32% increase in county aid to member libraries. County support of public libraries remained strong in the years following the campaign as the Berks County commissioners continue to show their support to this day.

# Library System History cont.

2008

Early Literacy Stations (ELS) were installed at every member library location. The ELS is a child-friendly computer loaded with early learning games and school-readiness activities for the county's youngest library patrons.



2011

Reading Public Library introduced downloadable eBooks to the public libraries of Berks County. The service launched in September with 500 eBooks available for Berks County library patrons to borrow.



2009

Library funding was cut by 20% from the state public library subsidy, resulting in reduced hours and cutbacks on new materials for Berks libraries. This was the most drastic cut in state funding since 2004, and funding for the public library subsidy remained mostly unchanged until 2019.

2012

Berks County Libraries joined over 600 Pennsylvania libraries in promoting five essential literacies for personal success.



2011

## A New Era of Lending

Electronic book lending of eBooks and eAudiobooks allowed libraries to take another step into the digital age by offering collection titles in an electronic format. Berks libraries began offering eBooks in 2011 through OverDrive, allowing library patrons to borrow books anytime of day without needing to visit a library in person. Though slow to start, interest in library eBooks grew as more users became aware of the service, resulting in on-going conflict between libraries and publishers.

In 2019, several major publishers altered their lending models to libraries, greatly restricting titles available for public access. These changes included embargoes prohibiting libraries from accessing new titles until after a designated period. Publishers hoped that by delaying when readers could borrow a copy purchased by the library, they would become frustrated and purchase the item on their own. Berks libraries along with many other libraries across the nation joined forces in boycotting electronic material from these publishers in protest, noting that access to books should not be limited to only those who can afford them no matter the format.

In March of 2020, just as the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic reached Berks County, one of the publishers spearheading the digital embargo reversed its decision and allowed libraries to once again purchase new release eBooks for patrons.



2014

In an effort aimed at developing early literacy in preschoolers, libraries in the county began participating in the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten initiative. Kids earn prizes by reaching reading goals.



2021

In June, BCPL added color blind glasses to the countywide Accessibility and Supportive Learning collection, becoming the first institution in Pennsylvania to offer EnChroma color blind glasses free for public use. Additional indoor color blind glasses and a reader scan pen were added to the Accessibility collection later that year.



2017

Upon receiving a generous bequest in 2016, the BCPL System worked with a team of skilled designers to redesign the library website. The new berkslibraries.org website launched on October 25.



2021

BCPL and the Reading Public Museum partnered to install a StoryWalk trail in the museum's arboretum.



2021

## Celebrating 35 Years of Transformative Library Service

July 2021 marked 35 years since the System's creation in 1986. Since that time, the definition of libraries and library service has evolved to better respond to growing trends and community needs. To celebrate library accomplishments over the last three-and-a-half decades, the System embarked on a mission to bring a greater awareness about modern library service.

The celebration began with the addition of color blind glasses to the countywide catalog. On June 26, five colorblind volunteers were invited to a live reveal event where they would try on the glasses and share their experiences. The event served as the official introduction into the collection, making Berks County Public Libraries the first institution in Pennsylvania to offer EnChroma color blind glasses free for public use. Dozens of cardholders have since borrowed the glasses, including two brothers – Trey and Tegan.

The celebration continued later that year as the ribbon was cut for the new StoryWalk at the Reading Public Museum's arboretum. The StoryWalk was a partnership between the System and museum in an effort to bring literacy and nature together. The rotating book selection will aim to include bilingual Spanish titles that compliment the museum's theme on exhibit.

Trey and Tegan Crowley seeing colors of the rainbow with color blind glasses borrowed from their library.

Dear Bernville Library -  
x/2021  
Thank you so much for the EnChroma glasses loan! Both Trey and Tegan have moderate/severe protan color blindness, and we have often considered getting them those glasses. However, it's an expensive investment without knowing if they would really make a difference.  
On the day the boys tried them, there appeared a double rainbow, and the distinction in the colors blew them away! The words they used were, "vivid," "saturated," "intense," and "wow!" Now we know the kind of correction the glasses provides, and we were so grateful to try them!  
♡ The Crowley's





# BERNVILLE AREA COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

Bernville Area Community Library is a vital public resource that serves to connect people of all ages to all forms of knowledge (books, movies, music) and to programs that not only educate but also inform, entertain and enrich. The library is committed to being a welcoming and safe environment for everyone. Well-informed and unbiased staff with a strong commitment to intellectual freedom and range of opinion offer helpful services to patrons of all ages. As a hub in the community, it provides an atmosphere that allows for lifelong learning.

## Year in Review

While 2021 presented challenges to the Bernville Area Community Library, we were able to adapt and tailor our resources in order to continue providing traditional library services to our patrons.

We began the year by offering virtual children’s programming three or four times a week through May. One program focused on Famous Women in History. In conjunction, we asked local girls to showcase their talents which were then uploaded to the library’s Facebook page to share with the community.

The library also expanded beyond a virtual setting to offer children’s programs outside at our local park. These outdoor events were offered throughout the summer and into the fall. During our Summer Quest

program held at the park, we offered a meet-and-greet experience with the Appalachian Pet Farm: Traveling Pet Zoo.

Additionally, the library was able to continue providing community outreach services by connected with our local daycare/preschool.

Throughout the year, we hosted several fundraising events including two successful book sales and a silent auction event during Bernville Community Day.

One particular success for the library this year was being awarded the PA Forward’s Information Literacy Silver Star in recognition for programs and services that promote comprehensive knowledge and communication.

As we look forward to 2022 and another year of serving our patrons and community, we would like to extend our sincerest thanks to our municipalities for their continued support and contributions to the library. With their help, the library is able to meet the needs of those in our community.



*The library’s summer teen helpers during the Traveling Pet Zoo.*

Debe Donley, Children’s Librarian  
Bernville Area Community Library

<b>Total Circulation</b> .....	<b>31,241</b>
<b>Collection Size</b> .....	<b>22,337</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers</b> .....	<b>1,288</b>
<b>Service Area Population</b> .....	<b>4,881</b>
<b>Patron Visits</b> .....	<b>12,987</b>
<b>Number of Programs</b> .....	<b>283</b>
<b>Program Attendance</b> .....	<b>21,802</b>



6721 Bernville Road, Bernville, PA 19506  
610-488-1302 | bacstaff@berks.lib.pa.us  
[www.berkslibraries.org/bernvill](http://www.berkslibraries.org/bernvill)



# BETHEL-TULPEHOCKEN PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Bethel-Tulpehocken Public Library brings people, information and resources together to enrich lives, advance knowledge, and strengthen the community.

## Year in Review

In 2021 we continued to build back our program offerings. Kellee Wood introduced a brand new class, Healthy Kids Club, where children of all ages learn about making healthy choices. About 25 children and teens join us each month. Oak Nut Farm sponsors the event, providing produce for the kids. Kellee also continued her Trim Healthy Mama class, Intro to Homeschooling, and other fun, informational sessions.

Betsy Kreider's Summer Carnival was the biggest yet, with over 300 attendees. Our sponsorship from JBT Bank and other local vendors allowed us to provide reading prizes, fun and games for everyone. She also began a popular Tween Book Club and continued her famous Teen Club and Pizza & Pages programs.

In November, we spent an activity-packed month celebrating Daphne Meyer's 40 years of service to the library. Our celebration included a campfire, Dress Like a Librarian day, Tell Miss Daphne a Joke day, and more.

Betsy's Gingerbread House Decorating and Breakfast with the Grinch events each brought over 100 attendees, bringing smiles and cheer to many local families.

The board hosted the library's first 5k and coordinated a successful mailing to help support the operation of our library.

Finally, we are excited to share that Bethel Township is in the process of renovating and expanding the library. In October, a new HVAC system was installed, so we have efficient heating and, for the first time, central air.



*The library welcomes new, exciting changes for 2021.*

We are so thrilled to be on the brink of a much-needed renovation and expansion that will provide the inviting, functional community center that our area needs. We can't wait to continue to grow our programs, technology, and collection in our new space.

Kaitlin Lehman, Co-director  
Bethel-Tulpehocken Public Library



8601 Lancaster Avenue, Bethel, PA 19507  
717-933-4060 | [bethelp1@berks.lib.pa.us](mailto:bethelp1@berks.lib.pa.us)  
[www.berkslibraries.org/bethel-tulpehocken](http://www.berkslibraries.org/bethel-tulpehocken)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>96,749</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>28,202</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>1,873</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>7,386</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>19,069</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>3,015</b>



# BOONE AREA LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

Boone Area Library’s mission is to provide a wide variety of materials and events which reflect the culture of our community. We serve to entertain, educate, and inspire life-long learning relevant to all. Our vision is to be a community dedicated to enriching the lives of all by bringing people, information, and ideas together.

## Year in Review

2021 was a year of transition for the Boone Area Library. Sadly, we lost our beloved Director Crescenda Long in June. Our patrons and the community were gracious and understanding while we worked through that very difficult time. We welcomed new staff including a new director toward the end of the year. While continuing to maintain compliance with COVID-19 protocols, the library provided curbside and in-person library services. Our Youth Services Coordinator continued offering outdoor programming via Read at the Park events throughout the year into the fall. We hosted our Summer Reading Program online and provided a continuous series of grab-and-go packs each week with special activities for children, teens, and adults.

We gradually introduced some indoor programming towards the end of 2021. Book clubs and the Mahjong club began the year virtually, but most ended the year meeting in person.

Our popular Duck Derby Fundraiser was held outdoors with COVID-19 protocols in place. We were thrilled to sell 999 duck tickets to support the library. The community was incredibly supportive, breaking records for attendance and participation. The library participated in a number of community outreach events,

strengthening relationships with our community partners and the public. In addition, we provided resources about federal taxes and opened up our community room for public events.

One of our goals this year was to improve our building. We accomplished that by having new carpet installed throughout the library, painting our Children’s Area, and purchasing new furniture.

2021 was challenging, but as things return to some semblance of normal, the perseverance of our staff, the optimism of our Board, and the resilience of our community will bring us all together.

Mary Picariello, Board of Trustees Chair  
Boone Area Library



129 N. Mill Street, Birdsboro, PA 19508  
610-582-5666 | boone@berks.lib.pa.us  
www.berkslibraries.org/boone

<b>Total Circulation</b> .....	<b>53,440</b>
<b>Collection Size</b> .....	<b>40,261</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers</b> .....	<b>2,293</b>
<b>Service Area Population</b> .....	<b>21,249</b>
<b>Patron Visits</b> .....	<b>16,230</b>
<b>Number of Programs</b> .....	<b>299</b>
<b>Program Attendance</b> .....	<b>5,053</b>



# BOYERTOWN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Boyertown Community Library will serve the community's diverse needs by providing current informational, educational, and recreational resources.

## Year in Review

In 2021, the Boyertown Community Library (BCL) worked creatively to serve the community with virtual and in-person programming. This year, we have seen an 17% increase in circulation from pre-pandemic times. BCL has continued to provide free Wi-Fi and computer service to patrons along with copy, fax, and passport services. Adult programs included weekly Scrabble sessions, a monthly book club, painting and financial management classes, an Anime Club, and a virtual cooking class. Patrons checked out free passes to area museums, including a new pass to the Museum of the American Revolution.

Youth programs included two children's author programs, craft events, virtual story time, and a stuffed toy sleepover. Over the summer, the library gave away 1,234 book kits containing a book, a craft and an extension activity to encourage reading and reinforce literacy skills. Both the StoryWalk at the Boyertown Community Park and Orchard Storytime at Frecon Farms continued to be popular events, and Youth Service Coordinator Denise Stout held virtual storytime for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers throughout the year. As the executive director, I represented the library at community events: Decorating a Pumpkin at Pickfest 2021 and Building A Better Boyertown's Chillin' on Main.



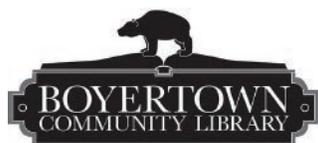
Several stuffed animals spent the night in the library during the stuffed toy sleepover.

BCL has an active Board of Trustees and Friends of the Library Committee. In 2021, the Board of Trustees approved a new Mission, Vision and Value Statement and are working on a new strategic plan for 2022. The Board Fundraising Committee held a new fundraising event, the Check Em' Out Basket Raffle and a Disc Golf Tournament at the Boyertown Community Park. Members of the Fundraising Committee created Easter craft kits and wrote personalized Letters to Santa as fundraisers. Around 100 Christmas gift bags with a book and crafts for children were donated to Boyertown Multi-Service.

The Friends of the Library hosted a monthly Used Book Collection and Sale. The proceeds from these sales were used to replace new exterior doors, purchase donor software and contributed to other much needed items. Additionally, the Friends group provided a Christmas tree for the Boyertown Multi-Service Festival of Trees fundraiser, provided books for the Laundromat Library Program and supported other charitable projects.

We thank all the businesses and organizations that gave financial and in-kind support in 2021.

Susan Lopez, Director  
Boyertown Community Library



24 N. Reading Avenue, Boyertown, PA 19512  
610-369-0496 | boyertowncl@berks.lib.pa.us  
[www.berkslibraries.org/boyertown](http://www.berkslibraries.org/boyertown)

<b>Total Circulation</b> .....	<b>170,939</b>
<b>Collection Size</b> .....	<b>39,751</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers</b> .....	<b>6,656</b>
<b>Service Area Population</b> .....	<b>15,634</b>
<b>Patron Visits</b> .....	<b>55,975</b>
<b>Number of Programs</b> .....	<b>289</b>
<b>Program Attendance</b> .....	<b>5,286</b>



# BRANDYWINE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Mission of the Brandywine Community Library is to encourage learning by providing free and equal access to information, technology, resources and services, be a gathering place for the community, and promote the love of reading.

## Year in Review

The year started off with online programming and craft kits to go. In May, we held our Wine and Stein fundraising event in person at Setter Ridge Vineyards. Mid-year we pushed toward a safe normalcy as we increased our hours, opened up all areas of the library and provided our popular Summer Reading program. Our summer attendance exceeded our expectations and was comparable to 2019. Our in person programs were held outdoors and the live tortoise and the hare race was a huge hit with patrons of all ages. Another favorite event was when the families walked around the outside of The Lutheran Home for our Tails and Tales parade for the residents. We also made cat and dog toys for the Sanctuary at Haafville.

We added board games to our collection and a pass for the Museum of the American Revolution. We also kicked off our fine free initiative in June which has caused a new wave of inactive patrons to return after not visiting for several years. Sheldon, our Greek Tortoise and mascot, turned 34 in August and we celebrated outdoors with games, cake and ended the night watching the Borough of Topton’s fireworks display.

We have seen an increase in teen participation and our youth book club set up a table at the Vendor and Craft Fair to help raise funds to add to the library’s teen space. Some teen favorite events have been Banned Book Trivia and Smashing Pumpkins.

The library helped our community save money by connecting community members to information, educational experiences and other helpful resources:

“All of our books for our homeschool curriculum are found through the library. Any questions we have or anything we need, our librarians help us so willingly.” -Rochelle S.

“Our daughter is a reluctant reader. We love Read to Sheldon because Sheldon just sits there and listens and helps boost her reading confidence.” -Mother of a third grader

Two residents mentioned they could not see well anymore, missed reading and struggled with large print. We helped them connect with the Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians and were provided audiobooks and a player.

Heather Wicke, Director  
Brandywine Community Library

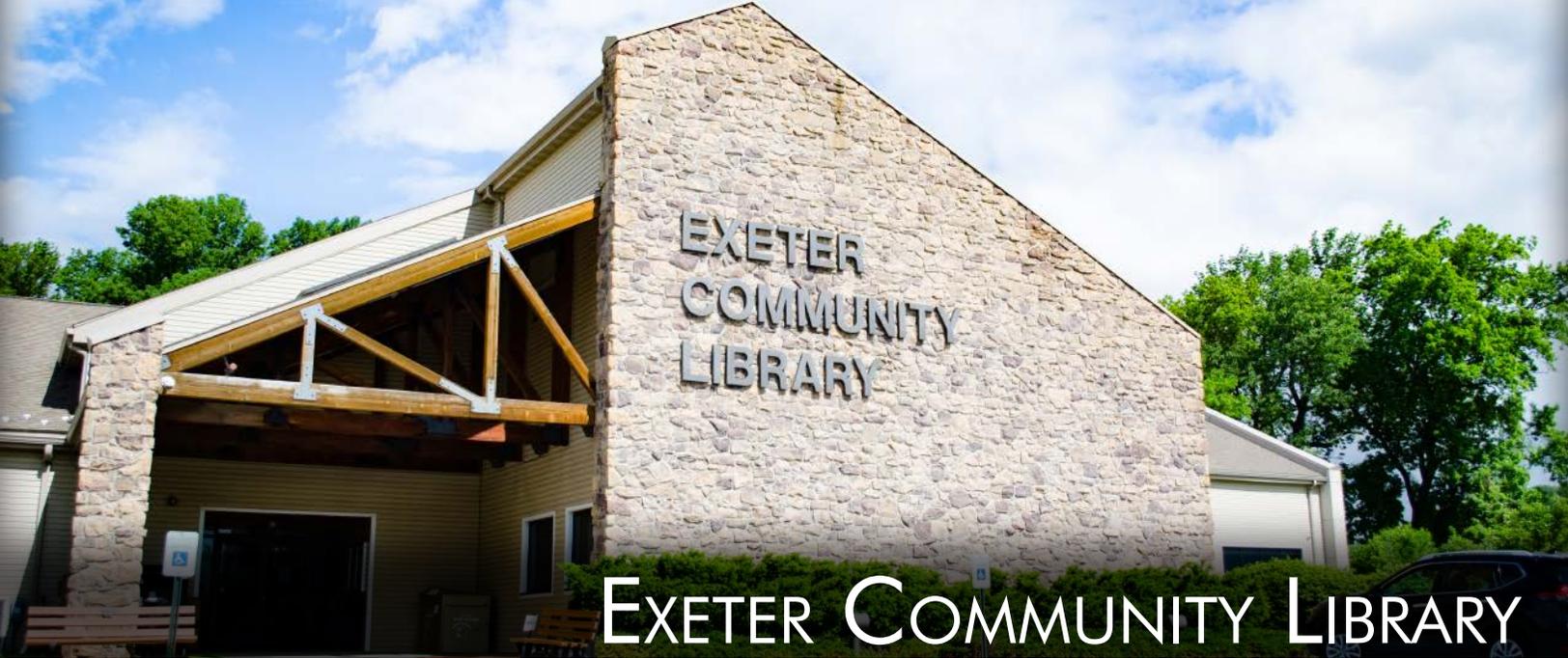


A group showing off their homemade tails for the Tails and Tales Parade.



60 Tower Drive, Topton, PA 19562  
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[www.berkslibraries.org/brandywine](http://www.berkslibraries.org/brandywine)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>46,283</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>32,781</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>1,664</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>12,863</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>14,194</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>339</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>4,108</b>



# EXETER COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Exeter Community Library is to provide an interactive, community-centered space in which to share resources that enhance the cultural, social, and intellectual lives of its diverse population.

## Year in Review

Right from its re-opening day in May 2021, The Exeter Community Library remained committed to making our family-accessible Storywalk® a dynamic and unique experience that changed with the seasons. The library formed local and regional partnerships to allow for monthly Storywalk® raffles like family passes to Longwood Gardens or ice skating passes to the BodyZone Sports and Wellness Complex. The project continues to be a staff and community favorite, and serves as Berks County’s very first permanent Storywalk.

We also partnered with other non-profit community groups that share in our mission, including the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks, Operation Warm and Berks-Lancaster-Lebanon Death Cafe. We brought back the Evening Reader’s Book Club to our in-person space and then grew to over 17 regular members. We experimented with ‘Blind Date With a Book’ in February

2021, and our first in-person ‘Death Cafe’ in July 2021. We received numerous, positive responses to both new programs.

Also in 2021, the library hosted several major author events, including NY Times best-selling author Daniel Silva, and the current National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature, Jason Reynolds! Despite holding these programs through Zoom, both events turned out fantastically, and we felt lucky to have been able to offer them to our community.



*Friends of the Exeter Community Library celebrate the launch of the library’s permanent StoryWalk.*

We moved forward through a pandemic the only way we as librarians know how - through stories and books. The Exeter Community Library looks forward to many great things in 2022.

Mallory Hoffman, Executive Director  
Exeter Community Library



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[www.berkslibraries.org/exeter](http://www.berkslibraries.org/exeter)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>181,177</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>58,761</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>7,754</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>27,359</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>43,646</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>7,677</b>



# FLEETWOOD AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Fleetwood Area Public Library serves the Fleetwood Borough, Maidencreek Township, and Richmond Township communities. Our mission is to drive the Fleetwood Area forward by providing equal access to quality resources and technology, encouraging an early and lifelong commitment to learning, and strengthening our community by providing and connecting patrons to quality programs and services.

## Year in Review

The Fleetwood Area Public Library (FAPL) is settling in to our new space on the first floor of the Community Center. While COVID still poses several challenges to library services, there have been many successes in 2021 we are proud of.

When our new library was designed, we wanted to offer spaces to meet, connect, work, or to just relax. These new spaces have been used in a variety of ways: It has been a shared work space for local professionals from social workers, financial consultants, human resource managers, and others needing a space to meet with clients. We have homeschooling families who meet and share resources to work on projects together. This past spring, local cyber academy teachers used our rooms to administer state testing to their students. All of these would not have been possible in our old library and we are just so thrilled to meet this need in our community.

As summer of 2021 approached many were facing a common dilemma: "Is it safe to resume in person programs again?" In response,

the Fleetwood Borough asked us to come up with an alternative to their annual camp to provide outdoor learning opportunities for children. A new partnership was born and the result was "Tigers in the P.A.R.K." After the stressful COVID learning environment of the past year, we felt it was important to get back to fun and exploratory learning. Twice a week we provided stories and stations for families to explore in our local parks. On the third day we met at a different location in our area to showcase a business or other local attraction.

The best part of Tigers in the P.A.R.K. is the entire program brought in cooperation from over a dozen organizations and businesses.

Finally, with funding from the Hawly and Myrtle Quier Fund of the Berks County Community Foundation, the FAPL presented "Where is Forward?" Through community conversations about our past, present, and future, "Where is Forward?" brought local organizations and leaders together, documented our past, and inspired partnerships to solve community problems while also helping FAPL "Drive Fleetwood Forward" through impactful resource, technology, and programming decisions.

Carin Milesosky, Director  
Fleetwood Area Public Library



*Tigers in the P.A.R.K participants learn about stream conservation.*



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610-944-0146 | [fleetwoodapl@berks.lib.pa.us](mailto:fleetwoodapl@berks.lib.pa.us)  
[www.berkslibraries.org/fleetwood](http://www.berkslibraries.org/fleetwood)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>64,903</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>24,576</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>2,349</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>16,608</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>23,186</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>391</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>8,626</b>



# HAMBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Hamburg Public Library provides services and programs to our community to encourage coming together, forming connections, engaging in lifelong learning, and finding inspiration. We believe in honoring yesterday, embracing today, and inspiring tomorrow.

## Year in Review

While the pandemic continued in 2021, the Hamburg Public Library served its community, which we have done in our original building since 1904.

2021 saw a number of important changes at the library. The Hamburg Public Library began the process of a long range plan. We talked to our local community to learn what we were doing well, what we could improve on, and what the community wanted from us. As a result, we crafted a new mission statement and have honed our focus on becoming a community hub that provides important services for the area, as well as a comfortable place to come together.

We have continued our partnership with Redner's Markets offering our grab and go kits at their Hamburg location. This year we distributed a staggering 5,978 children's kits to the Hamburg community! Following the success of our children's kits, we also began monthly adult craft kits for patrons to take home and enjoy. We were able to give out 500 adult craft kits between June and December.

Our summer learning program for 2021 was a success, in part because Hamburg Area School District teachers helped us distribute information about the event to area students. As a result, we welcomed many new families to the library and saw an increase in circulation surpassing pre-pandemic numbers.

Finally, we also celebrate some improvements around our building including new carpeting in our children's room and adult stacks, a new magazine rack, and the introduction of a new logo.

We are looking forward to many new exciting projects for 2022, including launching a homeschool collection and a monthly spice club. We are excited to have met the challenges of the continued pandemic, and are looking forward to brighter, more normal days ahead.

Chelsea Williams, Director  
Hamburg Public Library



*A young patron enjoying a library grab and go kit.*



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610-369-0496 | [hamburgpl@berks.lib.pa.us](mailto:hamburgpl@berks.lib.pa.us)  
[www.berkslibraries.org/hamburg](http://www.berkslibraries.org/hamburg)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>60,435</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>19,124</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>2,222</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>15,891</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>28,227</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>206</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>10,428</b>



# KUTZTOWN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Kutztown Community Library is a gathering place for minds of all ages to connect with the world and each other through our services and programs.

## Year in Review

“Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass. It’s about learning how to dance in the rain.” ~ Vivian Greene

2021 gave Kutztown Community Library plenty of chances to dance in the rain, literally and figuratively. A tropical storm informed us with a steady drip, drip, drip that it was time to seal the metal roof. The job was completed in time for the next storm and our collection of books, DVDs, and audiobooks stayed dry. With the watertight roof over our heads, we focused on unforgettable library experiences.

The new full-time Assistant Director, or as we like to say “Enjoyment Coordinator”, enhanced our ability to offer interesting programs, provide remarkable customer service, and be accessible to our community. Treasured events such as Story Times continued, new opportunities to connect grew from our Pen Pal program, and Grab & Go Kits allowed patrons to bring their creativity home.

We learned that there are no limits to programs with a virtual platform. We can discuss books with an author in New York, ask a professional from North Carolina questions on how to stay organized, or meet an elephant from Oklahoma. We can find the right expert to enlighten us on experiences from anywhere in the world.

Fundraisers were reimagined. The Holiday House Tour featured churches with expansive spaces and exquisite stained glass. The Country Cruise toured our municipalities while building relationships with residents and businesses. Donning fascinating hats, we enjoyed tea and sandwiches at the Sayre Mansion with pinkies up.

Patrons used our computers and free Wi-Fi for school, work, entertainment, and to connect with the world. A patron was able to get a job and find a new home using our technology. The hotspot program offers affordable internet.



Taylor Kutz demonstrates the use of a hotspot at a virtual story time. Photo by Ben Hasty, Reading Eagle.

Two amazing teen interns from the Kutztown Area School District and the Inclusive Internship Initiative provided input for programs and an equality project.

Our patron told us that “I love the library. It is like my second home.” We agree and find that as the year ends, we have discovered the joy of dancing in the rain where all can learn, discover and connect at the library.

Janet Yost, Director  
Kutztown Community Library

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>101,311</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>29,813</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>3,185</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>18,845</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>37,370</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>379</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>7,467</b>



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# MIFFLIN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Mifflin Community Library is to create and promote free and equal access to knowledge for our community through dynamic media, technology and programming in a safe, welcoming environment.

## Year in Review

The Mifflin Community Library continues to serve our diverse community of patrons while navigating the many challenges in 2021.

Our commitment to mindful collection development remains strong. This past year, we added items across the board. We saw a circulation increase in our Sci-Fi, as well as TV Series sections. We recently completed a significant library project by adding numbers to all of our Series Fiction, making it easier for patrons to locate items.

During our annual Summer Reading Program, we served 540 children, offering 40 programs over seven weeks. Partnerships with Nolde Forest and the Mifflin YMCA took off this summer, as we had our Youth Librarian offer programming. Our Virtual Summer Concert Series was a hit.

This year, we received grants from both The BCCF and the Friends of the BCPL to help us assist our patrons in nurturing their roots and expanding their horizons globally. Wellness has been a constant theme for us, as we continue to adapt and evolve to an ever-changing environment.

In 2021, we were pleased to see our Bilingual Story Time program soar, as we transitioned an outdoor space at Nolde Forest and Mifflin Park Elementary School. We were thrilled to see our monthly virtual programs thrive, such as Parent Support Group, Unlocked for Teens, Bedtime Story Time and Family Yoga.

In September, we welcomed back local groups, such as Knitters, Book Club and Pinochle. We are continually grateful for the hard work and dedication of our Friends Group, who ran donation drives in the form of flower sales, BBQ sales, bus trips and book sales. The Friends also celebrated their 20th anniversary this year!

We still have Grab and Go Bags, with items such as crafts, free books, and cultural items for adults. We incorporated a library treasure hunt for children to earn prizes throughout the autumn months and returned with our Annual Gingerbread House Program.

We are thankful to be able to remain a pillar of hope for our community during 2021!

Natasha Donaldson, Director  
Mifflin Community Library



*A young library patron explores some library decorations.*



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<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>115,572</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>36,189</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>4,496</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>26,340</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>36,655</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>322</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>10,145</b>



# MUHLENBERG COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Muhlenberg Community Library is to promote lifelong learning opportunities by offering free Library services to all who seek to change, improve, enrich, and enjoy their lives. Our vision is to build an awareness of the Library as a center of knowledge and resources as well as a springboard for creative ideas to enrich our community. Muhlenberg Community Library will be a welcoming safe hub of knowledge, resources, programs, and activities for all citizens to make connections towards community progress.

## Year in Review

In 2021, the Muhlenberg Community Library made a big comeback. After closure due to COVID-19, and a devastating flood to finish 2020, we greeted the new year with freshly painted walls, newly carpeted floors, and a determination to get back to doing, what we do best!

We began the year with a phased return to in-person browsing and continued our virtual programming which included Story Times, and guided Meditation Sessions. Additionally, we offered a broad selection of the newest reading material, DVDs, audio books, and e-books for check-out. Patrons enjoyed the Teen Book Drop Boxes, Family Stem Kits, and Adult Trivia Kits provided to take home.

During the spring, the library was awarded a \$1,000 Berks County Arts and Culture Ramp-Up grant from the Berks County Community Foundation for upcoming programming, which will be called 'The Arts Come to the Library' in 2022. The library also received an \$8,000 grant to continue the successful Teen Reading Lounge, funded by the

Pennsylvania Humanities Council, the Federal-State Partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Additional efforts to support the library included a variety of successful fundraisers such as book sales, raffles, and the Nellie Walter Psychic Medium Sessions. We also held our first Harvest Craft Fair which took place at the Muhlenberg Township Building.

The year concluded on a high note with another Summer Quest on the books, and a full return to in-person activities such as Pre-K Prep Story Times, the RPG Club for teens, the Teen Reading Lounge, and Movie Nights. Our Holiday Open House in December was a hit and featured story times and Conductor Dave's celebrated Toy Train Display.

As we look towards 2022, we are pleased to continue offering our quality programming, access to the latest technology and services, and a wide variety of the newest library materials.

Eileen Simms, Assistant Director  
Muhlenberg Community Library

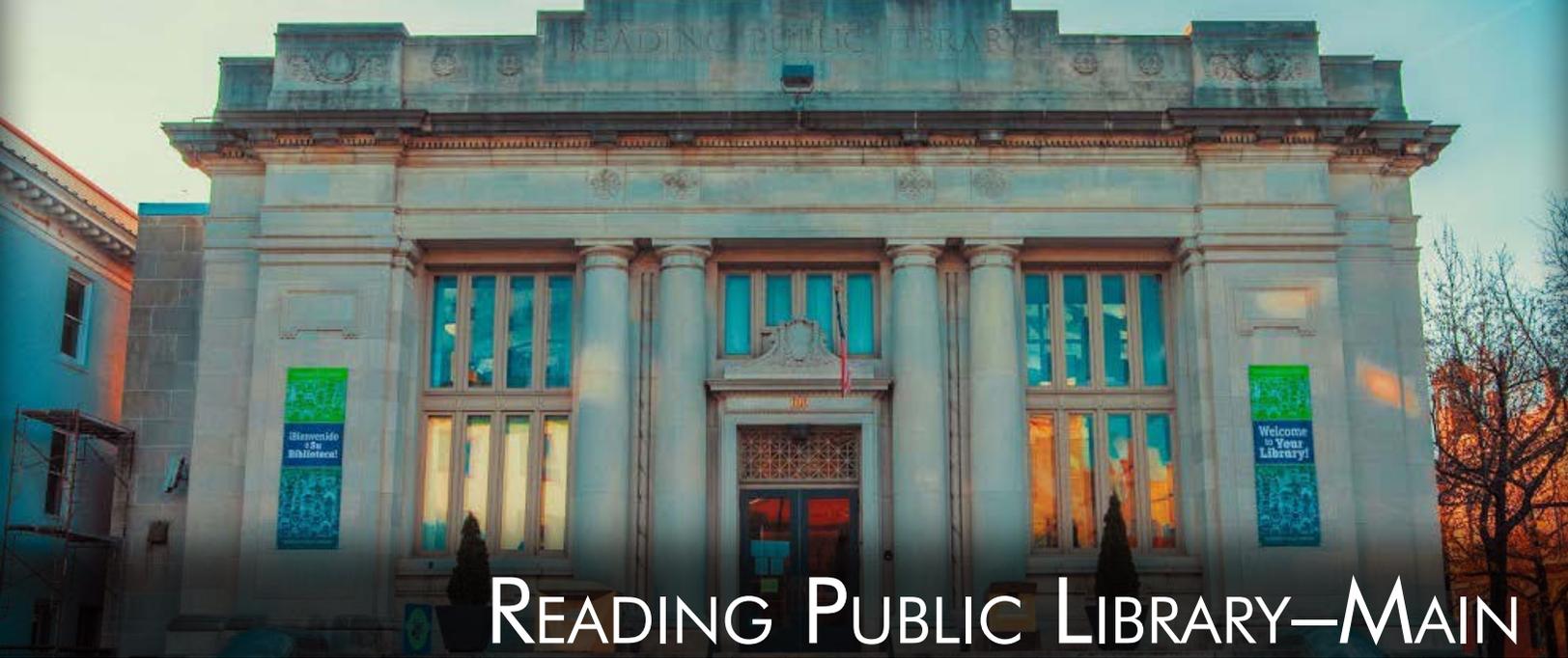


*Participants attend the library's annual holiday open house.*

<b>Total Circulation</b> .....	<b>42,412</b>
<b>Collection Size</b> .....	<b>34,335</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers</b> .....	<b>2,465</b>
<b>Service Area Population</b> .....	<b>27,290</b>
<b>Patron Visits</b> .....	<b>23,486</b>
<b>Number of Programs</b> .....	<b>151</b>
<b>Program Attendance</b> .....	<b>2,512</b>



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# READING PUBLIC LIBRARY—MAIN

## Mission Statement

The Reading Public Library will generate a library for the future by meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of library consumers today.

## Year in Review

In the second year of the pandemic and in a continuation of testing new strategies for success under adverse conditions, the library took the opportunity to reimagine its Strategic Plan. Development of the plan was facilitated by Matt Finch, an Associate Fellow of the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford. Encouraged to examine distant future scenarios illustrating social, political, and technological conditions, four tracks were developed to define strategies for success in the near future reflecting the insight that the library must adapt to community needs and engage with residents. Moving to a more proactive approach will ensure resilient library services that provide value in a dynamic world.

On June 1, 2021, Reading Public Library initiated its Fine Free Pilot Program. The program was designed to remove barriers to library services for city residents, and eliminated late fines on books, movies, music, and magazines. Library cardholders were encouraged to come into the library to have their privileges reinstated. This pilot program garnered local and national attention.

RPL received \$286,000 in private grants in 2021. On October 1,



*Rainbow in the children's room.*

2021, our annual Cocktails and Classics was host to 276 guests and raised \$137,000, an increase of 21.3% over 2020.

The Cameron Schrier Foundation grant of \$100,000 was part of a \$200,000 multi-year grant to support the hiring and retention of highly qualified staff for our library's youth services positions. Cecily Cameron, a Foundation co-founder together with her husband, Derek Schrier stated, "We're pleased to be able to support the retention of qualified, committed professionals who excel at providing fun and engaging literacy, STEM and cultural programs for the young people of my hometown."

The Main Library experienced a much-needed upgrade to the HVAC system, conversion to LED lighting throughout the library, and a new fire suppression system.

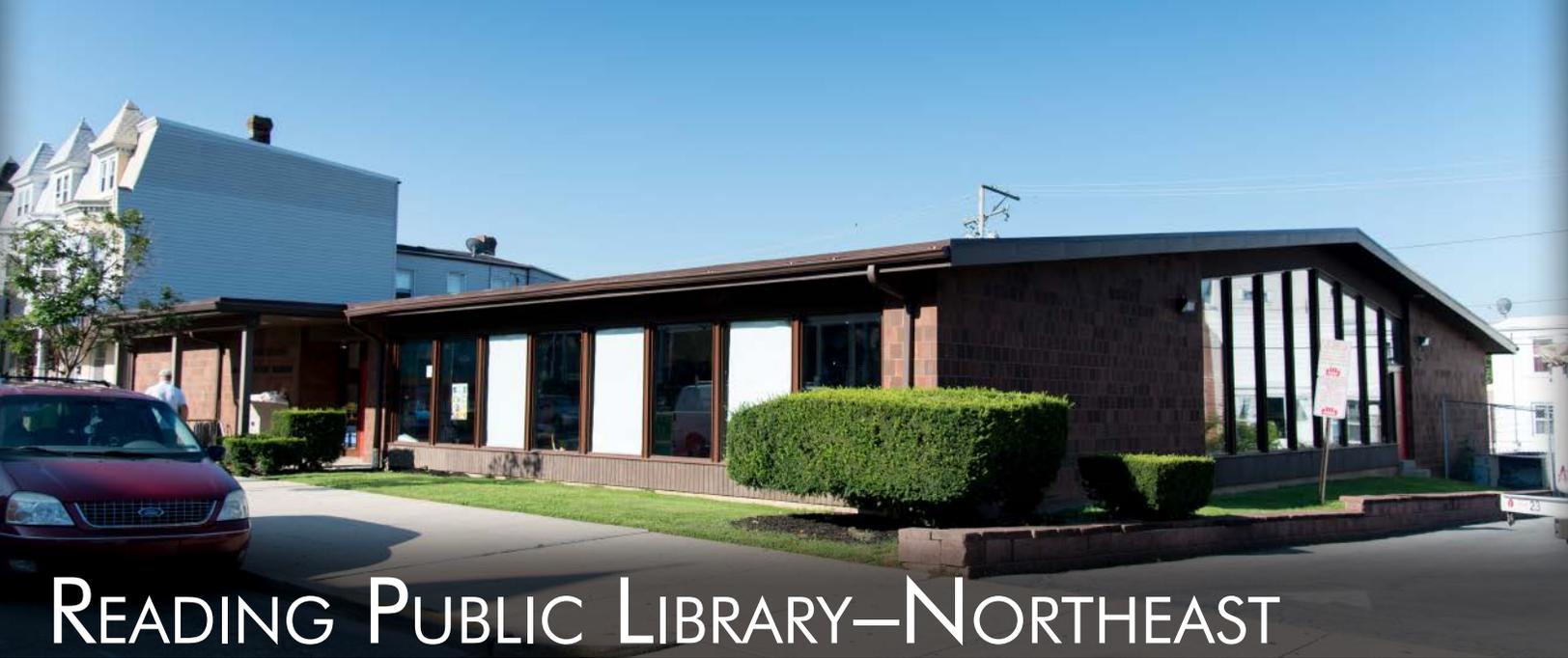
This was also a year to bid farewell to Bronwen Gamble, who retired after over 20 years of service, and to welcome Melissa Adams as the new executive director.

Jennifer Bressler, Assistant Director for Public Service  
Reading Public Library

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>109,664</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>247,058</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>11,868</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>88,082</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>66,514</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>1,068</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>34,910</b>



100 S. Fifth St., Reading, PA 19602  
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[www.readingpubliclibrary.org](http://www.readingpubliclibrary.org)



# READING PUBLIC LIBRARY—NORTHEAST

## Mission Statement

The Reading Public Library will generate a library for the future by meeting the informational, educational and recreational needs of library consumers today.

The Northeast Branch is a neighborhood library that offers opportunities to people of all ages. It is a safe gathering place. Our bilingual staff is happy to help our Spanish-speaking patrons and encourage them to utilize what we offer at our library. We provide materials and services in Spanish and English.

We are here to help everyone in both a live and virtual format, no matter the challenge of our changing circumstances.

## Year in Review

The Northeast Branch focused on lifelong learning. While our format for programming changed in our post-COVID world, we continued to strive to reach all audiences. Preschoolers continued to listen to stories told virtually and make crafts with our Go-Packs available at our library. We reached several daycares with our Learning Literacy kits. Children continued to use our computers to play games or complete homework, and adults continued to use our computers to search for jobs and post resumes.

We continued our weekly schedule of enriching activities for adults and children, including virtual story times, Family Nights, Girls who Code, Handfuls of History, Learning Literacy, chess and Lego clubs, and coloring club, ESL classes and a monthly book discussion for

adults. Many of these successful programs continued in a virtual format for 2021 and kept their enthusiastic audiences. We also returned to several in-person programs, to the delight of our patrons.

We were a resource for reliable health information this year, and helped to guide patrons when it came time to locating COVID vaccine information. Our adult patrons were thankful for our virtual yoga classes. The Food Trust also brought us their re-formatted Grab-and-Go bags that were very popular with our patrons.



*Young library patron with a modern yarn rainbow Go Pack.*

We were especially excited to host a virtual summer author series in 2021, which included a virtual visit with Jewell Parker Rhodes, a celebrated children’s author. She discussed her book *Ghost Boys*, a very timely book for 2021, and several others.

The Northeast Branch continued to be a place of amusement, connection and hope for the future. We look forward to 2022 and connecting in new ways with our patrons.

Rachel Constein, Branch Manager  
Reading Public Library—Northeast



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<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>19,456</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>25,402</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>11,868*</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>88,082*</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>15,607</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>4,803</b>

\*Branch serves same population as Reading Public Library—Main.



# READING PUBLIC LIBRARY—NORTHWEST

## Mission Statement

The Reading Public Library will generate a library for the future by meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of library consumers today.

The Northwest Branch is a community center, providing access to computers, digital and print media, and other tools necessary for personal and professional growth. With our various programs, we are a place for families to come together in the midst of busy life. We seek to be a place of refuge, where generous help is provided to all who come through our doors.

help in job searching, locating necessary legal documentation, and renewing automobile registrations, among other needs. Perhaps most importantly, we provided assistance in scheduling COVID vaccinations.

As the world adapts to its new mode of being, the Northwest Branch will continue adapting, discovering the best practices to serve its community.

Rob Martin, Branch Manager  
Reading Public Library—Northwest

## Year in Review

The Northwest Branch of the Reading Public Library continues to be a place of refuge for many within the community. As the world learned how to co-exist with COVID, our programming gradually moved away from virtual and back to in-person.

Each day, the local youth enjoys After School Club and Homework Help. In the safety of the library, they are able to socialize, study, play a video game, or relax with a craft. Our Autism Acceptance programming, designed to provide a safe space for neuro-divergent children and their caretakers, allows families to enjoy making sensory bottles, play in sensory bins, or participating in a personalized one-on-one story time. And, with a view toward literary appreciation, our Poetry Galore sessions expose youth to diverse works from writers old and new.

Along with children and youth programming, we continue providing practical computer assistance to patrons—creating an email account, performing an Internet search, opening a Word or Excel document, and linking accounts to smart phones and tablets. Patrons may receive

<b>Total Circulation</b> .....	<b>6,701</b>
<b>Collection Size</b> .....	<b>14,119</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers</b> .....	<b>11,868*</b>
<b>Service Area Population</b> .....	<b>88,082*</b>
<b>Patron Visits</b> .....	<b>9,396</b>
<b>Number of Programs</b> .....	<b>279</b>
<b>Program Attendance</b> .....	<b>2,849</b>

\*Branch serves same population as Reading Public Library—Main.



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# READING PUBLIC LIBRARY—SOUTHEAST

## Mission Statement

The Reading Public Library will generate a library for the future by meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of library consumers today.

The Southeast Branch is a busy library that serves a diverse neighborhood. We strive to provide resources and services that make a positive impact on our patrons’ lives. Our bilingual staff takes pride in helping patrons accomplish their goals.

## Year in Review

The pandemic continued to challenge us in 2021, but fortunately, the library was open and we were able to provide full services and a mix of virtual and in-person programs.

We collaborated in-person and virtually with several organizations in 2021, including Million Youth Chess Club, The Food Trust, Yocum Institute for Arts Education, Berks County Earth Day Committee, and Longwood Gardens. In addition, we worked with several local schools: 16th and Haak Elementary, Amanda Stout Elementary, and New Story School.

Summer@RPL was hybrid this year, with live programs like the Red Creek Wildlife Center Raptor Show, and virtual livestreamed and recorded performances by the Yocum Institute Teen Theater Ensemble, Talewise, Kindred Spirits Yoga, collage artist, Michael

Albert, authors Kevin McCloskey and Jewell Parker Rhodes, and others. Adults, teens and children logged their reading on the online platform READsquared to earn prizes. We handed out craft Go Packs for kids, Lit Kits for teens, and Take-Home Wellness Packs for adults.

We built and dedicated a high-tech private meeting room this year with funds donated by Jerome Marcus. The Jerome I. Marcus Meeting Commons accommodates up to six people and provides a comfortable, modern, quiet space for virtual and in-person meetings, workshops, and tutoring. It is a wonderful addition to the library!

We also raised funds to purchase a memorial bench in honor of Lisa McCoy, a former library employee. The bench was installed on the front porch and dedicated in March.

It was a year of continued pandemic challenges, but also one of learning, growth, and connection.



*Painting fun at the Southeast Branch library.*

Emily McNulty, Branch Manager  
Reading Public Library—Southeast



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<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>26,911</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>39,320</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>11,868*</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>88,082*</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>13,147</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>327</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>3,644</b>

\*Branch serves same population as Reading Public Library—Main.



# ROBESONIA COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Robesonia Community Library is to serve the community by providing materials and programs for patrons of all ages so that they may discover the power of information and develop the enjoyment of reading and learning both now and in the future.

## Year in Review

While 2021 may have been a new year for the Robesonia Community Library, we began with the same challenges of 2020 due to COVID-19. Our programs, such as Story Time and Teen Time, continued to be virtual, with Miss Leah holding programs on Zoom and posting recorded story times on our Facebook page. We also continued to hand-out craft packs for kids and Teen Book Drops for teens throughout the entire year.

In the spring, we participated in the Longwood Gardens Community Read and held a virtual Art Attack program related to the Community Read, *Ruby's Birds*, where kids learned about the artist, John James Audubon, and sketched birds like the artist. Every kid who participated also received a ticket voucher for Longwood Gardens. With spring, we also had change in our programs as we started offering outdoor programs at the Robesonia Park and Baseball pavilions in May! We started off with Outdoor Story Time and Outdoor Teen Time and then expanded to our other outdoor programs, like Crafternoon, Stem Time, and Movie Night, in June.

In June, we began our partnership with the LGBT Center of Greater Reading and began hosting our VOICES program for teens. We

also had a table set-up with games and a raffle at the Robesonia Street Fair. June was also the beginning of our Summer Quest, which could be done in person or online. During the first month of Summer Quest, we held our Furnace Creek study with Miss Cindy, where we visited a trout hatchery and explored in the local creek. Summer Quest ended in August with our Water Picnic where we provided food, crafts, water games, and at the very end, a water fight! We also ended our Summer Quest with our raffle prize drawings, many graciously donated by local businesses.

In the fall, we continued hosting our outdoor programs and we had a new addition to our staff, including library aide Izannah Bashore! As it got colder in November, we did begin having our programs inside, masks required. We ended 2021, with a Cookie Decorating Crafternoon, Holiday Movie Night, and our Wish Tree!

We thank our patrons, businesses, and municipalities who supported us in 2021 and hope to provide everyone with more material and services in 2022.

Leah Ruth, Interim Director  
Robesonia Community Library



*Library tent at the 2021 Robesonia Street Fair.*



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[www.berkslibraries.org/robesonia](http://www.berkslibraries.org/robesonia)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>23,273</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>21,595</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>1,004</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>4,999</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>14,570</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>690</b>



# SCHUYLKILL VALLEY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

Schuylkill Valley Community Library is dedicated to providing resources and opportunities that support the literary, technological, and leisure needs of our patrons.

## Year in Review

The biggest project for 2021 was implementing our \$134,712 Keystone Grant, from bid to build. This project included a new program and meeting space, a new walk-in closet for storage, 2 new restrooms, roof replacement, and installing automatic doors in our existing entrance for better accessibility. The total project cost was approximately \$325,000.

We also received a \$25,000 Keystone Communities Grant with the help of Senator Judy Schwank's office. These funds will be spent on a variety of things including tables, chairs, and other furniture and accessories for the new space, new staff computers to maximize our efficiency, and new flooring for the main library space.

We were fortunate to receive an incredible amount of support from Leesport Borough throughout our grant project, as well as donations from Ontelaunee Township toward the building project.

With regard to programs and services, we received a \$3,000 Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries

Grant. These funds were used to purchase a new laptop and sound equipment to be used for the virtual teen session(s) we are currently planning. The topic will be discrimination and literature. We also held a discussion for local 4th graders on stereotyping this past fall.

Our most successful programs for 2021 were contactless pick up, as a result of the pandemic. We offered Take and Make craft kits for adults, teens, and children, as well as storytime and homeschool program bags while we couldn't meet in person. We also partnered with Redner's in Leesport, which allowed us to offer stem packets for preschoolers, elementary, and teens for pick up near the check out area.

We have seen growth in usage of our electronic platforms, Hoopla and Libby, over the past year. Patrons are taking advantage of checking out electronic books, audiobooks, music, and TV/movies during the ongoing pandemic situation.



Construction of the new addition to the library. Photo taken on November 29, 2021.

Christie Brown, Director  
Schuylkill Valley Community Library

<b>Total Circulation</b> .....	<b>33,222</b>
<b>Collection Size</b> .....	<b>18,728</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers</b> .....	<b>1,668</b>
<b>Service Area Population</b> .....	<b>14,784</b>
<b>Patron Visits</b> .....	<b>10,890</b>
<b>Number of Programs</b> .....	<b>388</b>
<b>Program Attendance</b> .....	<b>12,418</b>



1310 Washington Road, Leesport, PA 19533  
610-926-1555 | svcl@berks.lib.pa.us  
[www.berkslibraries.org/schuylkill-valley](http://www.berkslibraries.org/schuylkill-valley)



# SINKING SPRING PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Sinking Spring Public Library has been serving the informational, educational and recreational needs of our community since 1965. The library is a place to stimulate creativity and intellectual curiosity as well as facilitate a love of lifelong learning for the residents of the Borough of Sinking Spring and all of Berks County.

## Year in Review

As the library stepped into 2021, we continued offering storytimes that lasted throughout the year, along with our popular take-home STEM projects, crafts, and other activities. Patrons of all ages were very appreciative of our on-demand programs/projects and loved the ability to bring home library crafts and educational activities that didn't involve screen time.

We held our annual Summer Quest program mostly in person with several special events taking place at our local playground. Some of our most popular programs included Spin Art T-shirts, Tie Dye T-shirts, and other craft-oriented programs. In addition to the event offerings, families continued to count up reading minutes to enter into our raffles. Prizes included gift cards, plants, STEM games, and free books. Our youth services librarian, Ms. Christine, also visited a local daycare for in-person storytimes and crafts.

Outside of Summer Quest, we were able to offer other popular programs during the year. Our 2nd annual Halloween Egg Hunt was a big hit. Children dressed up in their favorite costumes and hunted for eggs during a beautiful October day. We were also able to host our annual Holiday Open House in December, complete with games, cookie decorating, a take-home craft, and even Santa himself.

A record number of families joined the fun for the 2021 Open House—the most in over the last seven years. We were pleased and grateful to be able to offer these and other free programs for families during this trying time.

The library also participated in the Spring Township Halloween Parade where staff members and their families handed out candy to attendees. The staff had a great time promoting the library from within the community, and patrons were excited to see the librarians dressed as popular book characters.

The Friends of the Sinking Spring Public Library got creative this year, offering a bagged book sale where people could choose a pre-filled bag with a specific genre of book. Patrons were thrilled to be able to attend a library book sale once more but were very excited to shop the traditional, shelf-browsing sale in the fall. We are very fortunate to the members in our community who continue to donate items, keeping the shelves stocked and full of variety.

We're thankful for all of the wonderful things our library has achieved this year and look forward to new offerings in 2022.

Andrea Haas, Assistant Director  
Sinking Spring Public Library



3940 Penn Avenue, Sinking Spring, PA 19608  
610-678-4311 | [sspl@berks.lib.pa.us](mailto:sspl@berks.lib.pa.us)  
[www.berkslibraries.org/sinking-spring](http://www.berkslibraries.org/sinking-spring)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>70,894</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>28,368</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>2,414</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>4,008</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>29,285</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>2,883</b>



# SPRING TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Spring Township Library has grown during 2021 through the support of our patrons and staff. Our mission is to engage our community in literacy and learning by providing materials for life, work, and pleasure; and to engage in community outreach so the township’s population knows what libraries can provide for them. The Spring Township Library is an essential, strategic component to the success of the township.

## Year in Review

We at the Spring Township Library are proud to be a part of the nationwide library community that has continued to adjust and support patrons as we began to return to a sense of normalcy throughout 2021. As we keep adapting and evolving, we hope to do all that we can to continue to rise to the occasion and remain a dependable resource for all in the community into 2022 and beyond.

While the world was figuring out how to emerge from the hardships of last year, we were making sure our patrons had safe options for our services as we reopened. One key way we did this was by keeping our programs available both in-person and virtually for patrons with differing needs. While some of our events continued to be exclusively virtual, most of our summer children’s programs met in-person. In all, we held 170 programs, offering something for all ages. These programs cover everything from consistent storytime offerings, STEM programs, homeschool support groups, book

clubs, and family programs featuring animals and insects. Our programs were attended or watched virtually 5,440 times!

Throughout the year we have safely provided access to many materials whether by our Library-to-Go service, in-person lending, or digital media access through Libby. We continue to offer hotspot rentals for use at home or on the go.

While 2021 still dealt our community difficulties, we hope that it was a year of growth, finding strength, and some joy, as it was for us here at the Spring Township Library. With the help of our generous donors and township support, we look forward to welcoming 2022, and continuing to offer the same dependable and essential services to the communities that we serve.

Barbara Kline, Director  
Spring Township Library



*The therapy dog Aida Bella and local author Lisa Sondag stopped by for a storytime with some fans.*

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>65,540</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>49,066</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>4,265</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>27,119</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>29,155</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>5,440</b>



78C Commerce Drive, Wyomissing, PA 19610  
610-373-9888 | springtwp@berks.lib.pa.us  
www.berkslibraries.org/spring-township



# VILLAGE LIBRARY OF MORGANTOWN

## Mission Statement

The Village Library provides resources, services, programs, and technology to enrich lives, build community, and foster success.

## Year in Review

2021 proved to be a year of perseverance at the Village Library. We started out the year with partnering with It Takes a Village to install a little pantry outside our library grounds. We, as a library, understand the value of helping those in need and decided to have readily available nonperishable goods, personal hygiene & personal protective items like masks. Anyone can come and donate or take items at one's leisure. The pantry was so well received that a feature article was written in Town and Lively.

With the continuation of understanding the need of helping those in hard times, our library became fine free. We feel that in order to serve our community with equitable access; we would take away the burden of fines. Since becoming a fine free library, we saw a surge in new membership. From June until November, the library was seeing a range of 10-22 new registrants. With our findings, our circulation had dramatically increased from 2020. August proved to be our strongest month of circulation nearing 4,000 items being checked out. Numbers we haven't seen since pre-COVID.

This year proved to be anything but extraordinary. We got to have baby goats join us for a special story time at Swartz's Road Side Stand. Within 30 minutes of posting the event for registration, we filled up all available spots.

While we were reading with adorable baby goats, we also managed to get sponsorship from Iron Mountains to renovate our children's area. The room was completed in late fall. We understand the need to make our library for everyone. We have examined the best suitable materials for those who use wheelchairs, walkers, and other means for mobility when creating our new area which also contains mounted sensory toys which is great for children that have autism. The toys have proven to having a calming effect and help relieve anxiety for children who may be overstimulated by noise.

The library will be ringing in the New Year with opening up the community room and have a ribbon cutting ceremony for the play area. We are looking forward to begin our work with an outdoor reading garden, having in-person programs, and continuing our quest to find innovative ways to serve our community.

Maria Long, Director  
Village Library of Morgantown



Day of Giving in the new children's area.



207 North Walnut Street, Morgantown, PA 19543  
610-286-1022 | [village.library@villagelibrary.org](mailto:village.library@villagelibrary.org)  
[www.villagelibrary.org](http://www.villagelibrary.org)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>37,651</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>29,284</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>2,808</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>11,293</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>63,022</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>2,352</b>



# WERNERSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Wernersville Public Library inspires learning, creates community, and transforms lives with quality resources and services.

## Year in Review

There were so many opportunities to reach patrons in unique ways while pursuing the Library’s mission in 2021. What was great was how the COVID-19 pandemic once again failed to stop the Wernersville Public Library from being a critical resource for its community.

With a core charge to inspire learning, the Library continued to provide take home kits, not just for Storytime crafts but also for STEM Fridays. The Library recognized that some families did not have access to the materials needed to complete the experiments, so STEM kits containing supplies and instruction sheets were started. The Zoom program was recorded and put on the Library’s YouTube page so families who could not attend live could participate when they could. All of this combined to make STEM learning accessible for all children.

The Library was everywhere and partnered with so many in 2021! Nothing speaks to how well the Wernersville Public Library creates community as being told the Library can always be counted on to come out and support others’ events. This comment came near the end of the year when the Library attended the Conrad Weiser East Elementary PTO’s Holiday Shop. From book deliveries at Springrose Childcare and both Friday’s Child locations, to summer story hour at South Mountain YMCA, the Conrad Weiser Pool, The Cone, and year-round events at South Heidelberg’s Playground; whether at Lower Heidelberg Township’s National Night Out and

Western Berks Fire Department’s Open House, or outside on the lawn, the Library did its best to bring the community out of their homes and back together again.

There were many transforming lives moments that proved the Library’s positive community impact, too. Stories often heard included how a mother felt coming to outdoor storytime “was like visiting with family, in a time where she could not visit her own,” and from another, whose children attended STEM Fridays, expressed gratitude with how the Library enabled her children “to connect so much with the experiments and lessons that they would ask to recreate them on their own at home.”



2021 was all about being together once again.

Although it still provided free home delivery of books, and continued to expand access to electronic downloads of books, movies, and provide educational products such as LinkedIn Learning for those at home, getting out into the community in 2021 gave the Wernersville Public Library a chance to shine while providing smart and safe alternatives in services where and when needed while exemplifying the Library’s mission.

Leigh-Anne Yacovelli, Director  
Wernersville Public Library



100 N. Reber Street, Wernersville, PA 19565  
610-678-8771 | wernersvillepl@berks.lib.pa.us  
www.berkslibraries.org/wernersville

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>53,049</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>19,990</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>1,934</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>15,278</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>19,866</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>425</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>19,692</b>



# WEST LAWN-WYOMISSING HILLS LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

Open since 1937, the West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library is dedicated to providing access to the services and information our patrons need for today and for the future. Now a branch of the Spring Township Library, our two Library outlets work together with the Berks County Public Libraries to meet the ongoing educational and enrichment needs of the citizens of the Township.

## Year in Review

We at the West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library are proud to be a part of the nationwide library community that has continued to adjust and support patrons as we began to return to a sense of normalcy throughout 2021. As we keep adapting and evolving, we hope to do all that we can to continue to rise to the occasion and remain a dependable resource for all in the community into 2022 and beyond.

While the world was figuring out how to emerge from the hardships of last year, we were making sure our patrons had safe options for our services as we reopened. One key way we did this was by keeping our programs available both in-person and virtually for patrons with differing needs. We received a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of Commonwealth Libraries. This grant allowed us to host amazing programs for homeschooling, STEM, technology, and more! In all, we held 222 programs, offering something for all ages. Our programs were attended or watched virtually 4,321 times!

Throughout the year we have safely provided access to many materials whether by our Library-to-Go service, in-person lending, or digital media access through Libby. We continue to offer hotspot rentals for use at home or on the go.

While 2021 still dealt our community difficulties, we hope that it was a year of growth, finding strength, and some joy, as it was for us here at the West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library. With the help of our generous donors and township support, we look forward to welcoming 2022, and continuing to offer the same dependable and essential services to the communities that we serve.

Barbara Kline, Director  
West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library



*A group of children made jungle jar terrariums on July 8, 2021.*



101 Woodside Avenue, West Lawn, PA 19609  
610-678-4888 | wlwhl@berks.lib.pa.us  
[www.berkslibraries.org/west-lawn](http://www.berkslibraries.org/west-lawn)

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>40,058</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>19,250</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>4,265*</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>27,119*</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>11,001</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>222</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>4,321</b>

\*Branch serves same population as Spring Township Library.



# WOMELSDORF COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## Mission Statement

The Womelsdorf Community Library recognizes its responsibilities as follows: to provide high-interest reading, audio, audio-visual and electronic materials for all ages; to provide materials and story times that will encourage children to read; to sponsor special programs of interest to the community; to provide up to date access to electronic information services to patrons using the library; to offer basic reference services as part of the education and cultural life of the Womelsdorf Community; to plan and adjust for future needs of the Community; and to act as a Resource Center for the Womelsdorf Community.

## Year in Review

The Womelsdorf Community Library went through several changes in 2021. At the end of July, our previous library director, Nina Meister, stepped down to pursue other opportunities. Then in October, I was selected to become the library's next director. I was excited for the opportunity to step into this new position after previously serving as the Children's Program Coordinator.

During the interim between directors, the staff and Library Board of Trustees rallied together to ensure that the library would thrive during the uncertainty. Trista Oxenreider, our Board President, and trustee Carolyn Baurle put together a wonderful raffle fundraiser to bring some holiday cheer and extra funding to the library. The raffle was a huge success and we are so grateful for the support of the entire community!

We relaunched our Fire & Ice Festival in conjunction with our local community fair. We added new patrons and community donors, as well as new board members, while saying goodbye to some familiar faces. At the end of December, we said farewell to our respected trustee and treasurer, Tim Kreider, while welcoming Debbie Worrell and John Fraunfelter to our team.

While we are still living with the pandemic, we are learning to adjust and bring programming to our patrons in new ways. We continue to offer virtual story times, online family activities, and recently have begun story times in person again.



*Young readers share a story with special library visitor, Sasha the therapy dog.*

As the new director, I look forward to continuing my service here at Womelsdorf, and with the help of a stellar staff and Board of Trustees, I am very excited for the future of the library!

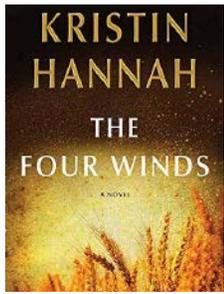
Sarah Bair, Director  
Womelsdorf Community Library

<b>Total Circulation.....</b>	<b>31,534</b>
<b>Collection Size .....</b>	<b>23,074</b>
<b>Registered Borrowers.....</b>	<b>1,584</b>
<b>Service Area Population.....</b>	<b>2,810</b>
<b>Patron Visits .....</b>	<b>12,183</b>
<b>Number of Programs .....</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>Program Attendance.....</b>	<b>9,241</b>



203 W. High Street, Womelsdorf, PA 19567  
610-589-1424 | womelsdorfcl@berks.lib.pa.us  
[www.berkslibraries.org/womelsdorf](http://www.berkslibraries.org/womelsdorf)

# 2021 Highlights



605,661 Library Visitors

69,654 Reference Questions Answered



207,712 Digital Downloads

33,078 Crates Delivered

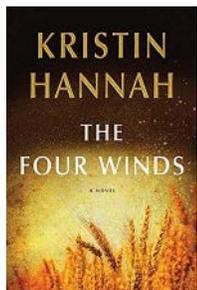


670,996 Website Visits



7,025 Library Programs

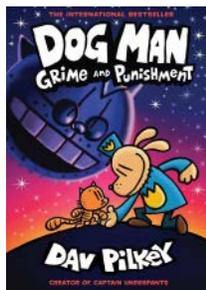
189,362 Attendees



Adult



Teen



Children's



Top Circulating Print Titles

1,482,415 Total Circulation of Library Materials



Berks County libraries saved residents over

**\$16,943,900**

in digital & print materials

# Summer Quest

# SUMMER 2021

Summer Quest is Berks Libraries' summer learning program that provides FREE amazing learning opportunities and activities to fight the summer slide.

## 1,400

programs were held to keep kids learning over the summer months! From outdoor STEM experiments to virtual storytimes, libraries were busy serving up fun.



## 21,290



children and teens participated in Summer Quest activities!

Over 35% of our families said they were brand new to our program and participating for the first time!

## 11,121

Grab & Go Learning bags were distributed throughout the summer. Kids and teens could grab a bag full of fun activities, brand new books, and more to participate in their own library experience at home!



98% of kids said they enjoyed Summer Quest!

95% of kids said they'd participate again!





BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES'  
**19TH ANNUAL**  

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**LIBRARY EXCELLENCE**  
**AWARDS**

**Celebrating Libraries— Honoring Innovation, Leadership, and Service**  
*Virtual Ceremony held on February 1, 2022*

Outstanding Community Organization.....	<i>Exeter Township Public Works Department</i>
Outstanding Local Business .....	<i>Boscov's Department Store, LLC</i>
Outstanding Elected Official .....	<i>Leesport Borough Council</i>
Outstanding Library Director .....	<i>Natasha Donaldson, Mifflin Community Library</i>
Outstanding Library Staff Member .....	<i>Stacy Laucks, Fleetwood Area Public Library</i>
Outstanding Fundraising Effort .....	<i>Country Cruise, Kutztown Community Library</i>
Outstanding Program .....	<i>StoryWalk, Boyertown Community Library</i>
Trustee of the Year.....	<i>Paul Hoh, Reading Public Library</i>
Chet Hagan Memorial Public Relations Award .....	<i>Kutztown Community Library</i>
Dreisbach Award for Exemplary Service.....	<i>Jennifer Smilko</i>
Linda Baer Friend of the Year.....	<i>Jean Davis, Friend of the Fleetwood Area Public Library</i>
Certificate of Merit .....	<i>Sylvia Shaner, Muhlenberg Community Library</i>

