

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES –
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
September 19, 2024

The monthly meeting of the Executive Committee of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, September 19, 2024, at the Audubon Branch Library pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Kimberly Johnson, Chair
Carima El-Behairy, Vice Chair
Elaine Panty

Also present were:

Alan J. Bedenko, Esq., Treasurer
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq.
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present for Executive Committee.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. None.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of July 18, 2024. Trustee Bucki suggested a correction to the Monthly Report of the Director. Trustee Panty made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair Johnson began her report by congratulating Trustee Christopher Sasiadek on his newborn baby girl, Phoebe Leia. She was notified that the family is doing well and the baby is happy and healthy! Discussion ensued about the newborn. Chair Johnson went on to say that she and Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino were asked to appear on Power 96.5 Radio WUFO with Congressman Timothy M. Kennedy to speak about literacy and the Library. Next, Chair Johnson informed the Executive Committee of the statues erected by the Trailblazing Women of WNY at the Old Erie County Hall located at 92 Franklin St. She encouraged the Executive Committee to visit the statues of Louise Blanchard Bethune, Mary Burnett Talbert, and Geraldine “Gawö:sid-tah”. Discussion ensued about the statues and their placement.

Following that, Chair Johnson recognized that the Central Library will be turning 60 years old this year. She went on to explain the celebration that will be happening at the

library on Friday, October 18. Discussion ensued about the upcoming event. Lastly, Chair Johnson made note that the Angola Public Library will be celebrating their 100 year anniversary on Saturday, October 19, and the Books, Bites and Banter event happening at Big Ditch Brewing on Wednesday, October 16, to support the Library's "Bucks for Books" Campaign. Discussion ensued regarding these events.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on August 8, 2024. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. There was no quorum for the Executive Committee scheduled on Thursday, September 12, therefore it was canceled. Trustee El-Beahiry briefly summarized the meeting that occurred on Thursday, August 8. Trustee Bedenko asked about the creation of an ad hoc committee regarding patrons appealing the decisions made on their request for reconsideration of materials. It was agreed by the Executive Committee that the creation of an ad hoc committee will be added to Agenda Item K – New Business. Trustee El-Beahiry moved to have the written report entered into the minutes, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Beahiry, and members Elaine Panty and Christopher Sasiadek. Also present were Director John Spears, Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich

Excused: Member Lucy Candelario

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:02 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Chair Johnson began the meeting by reminding the Executive Committee members of their Trustee Education Requirement. An email was sent to the entire Board regarding the requirement mentioned above and the mandatory Sexual Harassment Prevention Training.

Next, Trustee Panty shared that she had a dinner with former Board members and retired Library administrators. She stated that it was a great time. Discussion ensued about former Library directors and Board members.

Trustee El-Beahiry shared that the Foundation sent out a survey initiated by City of Light Consulting, LLC. It was noted that the Executive Committee did not receive it. Trustee El-Beahiry stated that she will follow-up on resending the survey via email. Trustee El-Beahiry also mentioned she went to the Angola Public Library Board of Trustees meeting and was informed that they are having their annual dinner on Saturday, October 19. Discussion ensued about last year's dinner and other programs held at the Angola Public Library.

Next, Trustee Sasiadek stated that he represented the Board at *Library Night at the Ballpark* on Friday, July 19. He shared that it was a great night and that the Buffalo Bisons won. Discussion ensued about the baseball game.

For the Report of the Director, Director Spears shared that there has been a committee established to review the RFPs for the Central Library Space Utilization Study. He stated that the committee chose their top four choices and that they will be meeting with Erie County to review. Erie County gets two votes and the Library gets one on whom they will choose for the project. Next, Director Spears informed the Executive Committee that a patron who requested reconsideration of two children's books involving drag queens wants to appeal the decision made to the Board. The patron missed the deadline to submit an appeal. Director Spears suggested informing the patron to submit the appeal again, rather than going through the entire request for reconsideration of materials process again. Discussion ensued about the current request for reconsideration of materials process and potentially reviewing the procedures. Further discussion ensued about the Board forming a committee to handle submitted appeals. Trustee Panty stated that she would not like to be a part of the committee. Chair Johnson asked about the challenge the Library received of the film "The Sound of Freedom". Director Spears informed her that the Library never received an appeal after a decision was made. Trustee El-Behairy stated that at the Angola Public Library staff were asked by Kenmore Public Library staff if a copy of their "The Sound of Freedom" DVD was vandalized. Director Spears informed the Executive Committee that a DVD copy of the film was vandalized at the Kenmore Public Library. There is no way to determine who did it. Discussion ensued regarding the damage of the DVD. Further discussion ensued regarding library materials being challenged in general.

Chair Johnson mentioned an email that she received regarding the Library allowing people outside of Erie County to sign-up for library cards. Discussion ensued regarding this concern. It was determined that there is no way to ascertain whether or not this would be the reason library materials are damaged, on a long hold list, etc. Library materials are only shipped by the Library by Mail program for Erie County patrons who cannot physically get to a library location. Discussion ensued regarding out-of-county library card holders and the concern that was submitted.

Finally, Director Spears informed the Executive Committee that Special Collections Librarian Rhonda Hoffman was acknowledged in the New York Researcher Preservation in Action 2024: "Women in the Field" as a Partner Honoree. Rhonda is a genealogy specialist in the Grosvenor Room and has a passion for public librarianship.

There being no further business, Trustee Sasiadek motioned to adjourn, and Trustee Panty seconded. The meeting ended at 4:36 p.m.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Resolution 2024-19 – NYS Construction Aid Request – Central Library. Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik introduced Facility

Operations Manager Andrew Wiede to explain proposed Resolution 2024-19 as presented below. Facility Operations Manager Wiede summarized the details of the proposed Resolution 2024-19 and made a correction to the background portion of the proposed resolution to 90% rather than 75%. The details of the rest of the resolution are correct. ADD-Controller Patronik clarified that this proposed resolution is specific to a roof replacement at the Central Library and is not for the entire green roof project. Discussion ensued about the current roof's status and the eventual green roof addition.

RESOLUTION 2024-19

WHEREAS, up to \$2,011,297 in the New York State \$44,000,000 Public Library Construction Aid Program funding is available to support up to 75% of eligible costs for projects benefitting libraries located in economically disadvantaged communities and up to 50% of eligible project costs for other libraries located within Erie County, and

WHEREAS, this aid provides an opportunity to leverage local funds to increase the amount available to finance badly needed capital rehabilitation and improvement projects, and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's Central Library is in need of replacing the roof in preparation for the implementation of a vegetative roof and solar array, and

WHEREAS, estimated construction related costs for this work total \$4,125,000, with the amount eligible to be requested from State Aid totaling \$3,093,750, and

WHEREAS, a 2025 Capital Project Request for \$3.5 million has been submitted to the County, which will serve as local match for this project and cover the cost of the project, less the grant award, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, pursuant to the requirements of the New York State Library Construction Aid Program, that the Board of Trustees Executive Committee of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) assures that:

- 1) It possesses the legal authority to submit this application including all understandings and assurances contained herein and to direct and authorize the person identified as the construction project manager to act as the official representative of the applicant in connection with this application and to provide such additional information as may be required;
- 2) The Library fully expects the project will begin construction, or continue construction work in the case of a project that has begun but is not complete as of the date of application to the Library System, within 180 days after receipt of written notification from the State Education Department that State Aid construction funds have been approved for the project and that the conditions of the funding have been met;

- 3) The project will be conducted in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, including New York State Library Construction Aid Program rules; and
- 4) Pursuant to the terms of Chapter 768 of New York State Laws of 1953, under which the B&ECPL was established, the County of Erie-owned Buffalo & Erie County Public Library building is a public library operated by the B&ECPL, which the B&ECPL fully expects and intends to operate as a public library for a minimum of 10 years from the date of the anticipated completion of construction; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above proceeds will be made available to reimburse the County of Erie for project related expense undertaken by the County as owner of the building, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL authorizes the Library Director or his designee to submit a \$44,000,000 NYS Public Library Construction Aid Program request for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library - Central Library Roof Replacement project in the amount of \$1,587,286.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-19 as amended, Trustee El-Beahry seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Resolution 2024-20 – NYS Construction Aid Program – Systems Evaluation and Recommendations. Facility Operations Manager Wiede explained proposed Resolution 2024-20 as presented below. Trustee Bartholomew asked for clarification regarding the total project cost, aid request, and recommended award. Discussion ensued regarding the funding and local match based on municipality.

RESOLUTION 2024-20

WHEREAS, up to \$2,011,297 in the \$44 million state-wide New York State (NYS) Public Library Construction Aid Program is available to support up to 90% of eligible costs for libraries serving economically-distressed communities, up to 75% of eligible project costs for libraries serving economically-disadvantaged communities and up to 50% of eligible project costs for other public libraries in Erie County, and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) in its role as a Library System must evaluate and recommend approval of construction applications submitted by public libraries or public library systems, and

WHEREAS, a total of six projects were submitted for this program, supporting the Anna Reinstein Memorial Library; the Central Library; the Clarence Public Library; the Elma Public Library; the Lackawanna Public Library; and the Newstead Public Library and

WHEREAS, on September 15, 2022, the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL in Resolution 2022-29 set the criteria for qualifying for up to 75% funding as:

- Libraries whose chartered service areas are located in communities with an average poverty rate equal to or greater than the NYS average poverty rate using federal census data, and/or
- Libraries physically located within the boundaries of a school district whose student population’s participation in the federal free and reduced lunch program is 30% or higher, and

WHEREAS, two of the six libraries qualify to receive up to 90% Construction Aid Program funding as they serve economically-disadvantaged communities, specifically: the Central and Lackawanna libraries qualify under both criteria while the Anna Reinstein and Newstead Libraries qualify to receive up to 75% Construction Aid funding under the school lunch participation criteria, and

WHEREAS, Construction Aid Program funding requested totals \$ 3,517,716, which is \$ 1,506,419 above the \$2,011,297 allocation available under this program, and

WHEREAS, after review, the following allocation method is recommended: 1) fully fund the 2 libraries requesting less than \$300,000; and 2) reduce recommended funding for the 1 library requesting over \$300,000 to balance the total allocation available, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Construction Aid Program requirements and the above criteria, the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL recommends approval of the requested projects, in the following amounts:

Library	Total Project Cost	Aid Request	Recommended Award
• Anna Reinstein Memorial Library Roof Replacement & Exterior Rehabilitation	\$ 397,465	\$ 298,099	\$ 298,099
• Central Library Roof Replacement	\$ 4,125,000	\$ 3,093,750	\$ 1,587,286
• Clarence Public Library Boiler and Compressor Replacement	\$ 98,322	\$ 49,161	\$ 49,161
• Elma Public Library HVAC Replacement	\$ 47,912	\$ 23,956	\$ 23,956
• Lackawanna Public Library	\$ 33,585	\$ 30,227	\$ 30,227

Boiler & Hot Water Heater Replacement

- Newstead Public Library \$ 30,090 \$ 22,568 \$ 22,568
Fire Alarm System Replacement

TOTALS: \$ 4,732,374 \$ 3,517,761 \$ 2,011,297

and be it further

RESOLVED, that subsequent to this resolution’s passage should any of the above projects or individual components of said projects be: 1) withdrawn; 2) determined by B&ECPL or NY State Library reviewers to be ineligible for Construction Aid and/or local match; and/or 3) should the NY State Library reallocate additional funds for projects, any share of the funding allocation freed up and/or additional funding provided is recommended to be distributed proportionally to the remaining projects whose request was not fully funded, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Director or his designee is authorized to transmit the necessary online grant application, forms, and documents in time to meet the October 2, 2024 filing deadline.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-20 as amended, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Resolution 2024-21 – Love Your Library Grant Award. ADD-Controller Patronik summarized the proposed Resolution 2024-21 as presented below. She mentioned that this is a reoccurring grant that is awarded every year. Discussion ensued about how the award is used. Trustee Bucki suggested correcting “fund” to “funds” in the fifth “RESOLVED” paragraph.

RESOLUTION 2024-21

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library received notification of the *Love Your Library* grant award from New York State Library, and

WHEREAS, this funding is intended to strengthen and support public library system and member library programs and services, and

WHEREAS, a grant budget needs to be established to undertake the program, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the award and authorizes amending the 2024 Grants Budget by appropriating grant

revenue and expenditures in the amount of \$4,571 to establish the *Love Your Library* Grant, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL approves utilizing these funds to strengthen and support the Youth Outreach services throughout the System, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL authorizes establishing a *Love Your Library* grant budget in the following amounts:

Grant Project Revenue:	\$4,571
Grant Project Expenditures:	\$4,571 and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or designee is authorized to execute the necessary forms and documents to implement this grant.

Trustee El-Behairy motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-21 as amended, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item E.2.d – Resolution 2024-22 – Revise State Aid & Grant Budget. ADD-Controller Patronik summarized the proposed Resolution 2024-22 as presented below.

RESOLUTION 2024-22

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library receives recurring state aid to support various library activities, some of them budgeted in the library operating budget and some in the library grant budget, and

WHEREAS, final amounts for the State's 2024-2025 fiscal year are now known, and

WHEREAS, the combined recurring operating and grant aid will increase by \$118,338 from the 2024 budgeted amounts, and

WHEREAS, the Library wishes to adjust the operating and grant budgets to reflect the above changes, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Executive Committee approves amending the 2024 grant and operating budgets to implement the following revenue and expenditure budget increases:

Grant	Revenue Increase	Expense Increase
Central Library Services Aid	14,330	14,330
Coordinated Outreach	7,210	7,210
Library Services to County Corrections	329	329
Library Services to State Corrections	1,718	1,718
Total NY State Recurring Grant	23,587	23,587

	Revenue Change
408140 State Aid - Library System	83,030
408150 State Aid - Member Libraries	11,721
402190 Appropriated Fund Balance	(94,751)
Total Operating Change	0

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-22 as amended, Trustee El-Beahry seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item E.2.e – Resolution 2024-23 – Revise Budget for Erie County Legislative Aid. ADD-Controller Patronik summarized the proposed Resolution 2024-23 as presented below.

RESOLUTION 2024-23

WHEREAS, at their April 19, 2024 meeting, the Erie County Legislature approved \$190,000 in available 2023 surplus county funds to support security at the Central Library, and

WHEREAS, the County’s much appreciated support of these activities will make a positive difference for library patrons, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the allocation of \$190,000, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the B&ECPL approves the following amendment to the 2024 Operating Budget, increasing revenues and expenses as follows:

2024 Operating Budget		
Revenue and Expense Increase		
Revenue	SAP #	Amount
Misc. Receipts	466000	\$190,000
Expense		
Peacemakers services	516020	\$190,000

and be it finally,

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or designee is authorized to transfer these funds to other expense accounts within the budget as needed to accomplish these objectives.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-23 as amended, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item E.2.f - Monthly Financial Report. ADD-Controller Patronik informed the Executive Committee of the monthly financial reports ending in June 30, 2024, and July 31, 2024, which were provided for the Board of Trustees in their Board packet. She stated that the Library is in good standing and that they expect to hear about the proposed 2025 budget soon.

Agenda Item F - Report of the Director. Director Spears began his report by notifying the Executive Committee that they have two monthly reports in their Board packet. One for July 2024 and one for August 2024.

Next, Director Spears stated that B&ECPL Board of Trustees Erie County Liaison Monica Boutin will be moving to a new position within Erie County and will no longer be the Board's liaison. Director Spears wanted to note that she was exceptional in her duties to the Board. Director Spears announced that the Board's new Erie County Liaison will be David Bojanowski.

Moving on, Director Spears mentioned that the Library has selected a vendor for the Space Utilization Study at the Central Library. There were over 15 applicants and the vendor should be notified soon of their contract award. Discussion ensued regarding the selection process and the company that was selected.

Following that, Director Spears stated that, at the Board's direction, there has been planning regarding getting the Board together to create a vision, mission, and values statement for the Library, which could include a retreat. There was a solicitation for bids, and the contract was awarded to Mary Beth Debus of Program Savvy Consulting. Director Spears suggested that the Board create an ad hoc committee to begin assisting with this project. Some of the work to be done is identifying key stakeholders and

elected officials. Discussion ensued regarding the chosen consultant and the formation of a committee. The creation of an ad hoc committee will be discussed under Agenda Item K – New Business.

Next, Director Spears shared that the Teen Space at the Central Library has been working well and it has been a successful start to the school year.

Lastly, Director Spears announced that Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell will be leaving the Library on Tuesday, October 1. Director Spears wanted to thank COO – Purtell for all of her hard work and dedication to the Library for 13 years. Director Spears went on to explain the process of hiring a new Deputy Director, which includes having interested Board members attend the final interview. Discussion ensued about the hiring process. Chair Johnson asked to say a few words to COO – Purtell, thanking her and sharing how invaluable she has been to her. She went on to tell COO – Purtell how appreciative she is of her and how her work has not gone unnoticed.

The following report was submitted by the Director and transmitted to Board members prior to the meeting:

B&ECPL Monthly Report July 2024

Creating Reading Rainbow: The Untold Story of a Beloved Children’s Series - Assistant Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden**, System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger**, and System Borrower Services Manager **Linda Rizzo** attended the launch of the new book, *Creating Reading Rainbow: The Untold Story of a Beloved Children’s Series* by Barbara Irwin, Tony Buttino, Sr., and Pam Johnson held at Buffalo Toronto Public Media on July 9. The event included a panel discussion with the authors moderated by former Buffalo Toronto Public Media President and CEO Don Boswell, a Q&A session, and book signing. As stated in the invitation for the event, “The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library system played an important role in partnering with WNED-TV on various summer reading programs during the series’ development. Five summers of experimentation are featured prominently in the book.”

North American Science Fiction Convention (NASFiC) - System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy**, TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline Hovey**, and System Adult Outreach Services Librarians **Jacob Rachwal** and **Melissa Blattner** participated in the *North American Science Fiction Convention (NASFiC)* held at the Buffalo Convention Center on July 18 through July 21. They interacted with attendees from across the country who expressed their love of libraries. They made themed buttons and shared information on programs offered by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System.

Preservation in Action 2024: "Women in the Field" - Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** was honored this year as part of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society's inaugural series, *Preservation in Action 2024: "Women in the Field."* This new series spotlights leaders and trailblazers whose innovative work inspires, educates, and has a lasting impact on the genealogy and family history field. This is a wonderful recognition by her peers of Rhonda's ongoing work here at the Central Library guiding the genealogy-interested public!

Board Game Day @ Merriweather Branch Library - Life-Sized Board Game Day; Librarian **Heather Bermingham** transformed the entire children's space into life-sized Candyland. The program was heavily attended and so popular that the branch left it up and running all week.



Ice Cream Social @ Elaine M. Panty Branch - On Saturday July 13, the staff at the Elaine M. Panty Library and the Friends of the Elaine M. Panty Library hosted the annual summer Ice Cream Social for all patrons. Participants were able to customize their sundaes with a choice of cone or bowl, a variety of ice cream flavors, and (of course!) a HUGE selection of toppings. A great time was had by all who attended!

1. Public Services

Central Library:

World Chess Day 2024 was celebrated on Saturday, July 20, with an outdoor Chess Tournament on the sunny front ramp, hosted by longtime Chess partner Michael McDuffie. Twenty players of a variety of ages and skill levels participated with parents and friends watching.

The Central Library again partnered with the Historic Colored Musicians Club on the **20th Annual Queen City Jazz Festival**, held in front of the Library on Washington Street and Lafayette Square before an estimated 550 jazz lovers. Beautiful weather and masterful musician headliners encouraged dancing in the street! The festival was on Saturday, July 27.

System Services:

Displays and Exhibits – Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** set up two new displays outside of the Grosvenor Room at the Central Library. The *Map* display now contains samples of the library's plastic relief maps by the Army Map Service, including a view of Buffalo and vicinity. The new *Gluck Manuscript* display exhibits a handwritten letter by Joel Chandler Harris and a few of his Uncle Remus books held in the Rare Book Room collections. Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring** set up a new display outside the Grosvenor Room about the *History of Disability Pride*, utilizing items from both the Grosvenor Room and the general non-circulating collection. The *Four Centuries of Bookbinding: The Jordan Collection* exhibit will be removed in August 2024 in preparation for the *Rare Books 101* exhibit.

Genealogy Training - **Rhonda Hoffman** presented genealogy training that included *Jumpstart Your Genealogy* at the Dudley Branch Library on July 2 and *Cool Tools for Genealogy* held virtually on July 31.

The Western New York Genealogical Society provided volunteers to assist researchers with genealogy reference questions on July 15 and July 22 in the Grosvenor Room.

Health and Wellness - **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated the *Wellness @ Central* tabling event held at the Central Library on July 18. There were 17 community organizations who participated in the event, sharing health and wellness resources for patrons.

Re-Entry Housing Fair – Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** assisted Spectrum Health Services in hosting their first *Re-Entry Housing Fair* held at the Central Library on July 26. Partners from Back to Basics Ministry, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, It Takes a Village Action Group, Buffalo Employment & Training Center, Group Ministries, Creative Restoration, Veterans One Stop, and Veterans Administration's Justice Outreach department attended the events and provided attendees with information and resources to find safe and affordable Housing solutions.

Small Business Programs – **Carol Kowalik-Happy** arranged to have a series of webinars presented by Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) held virtually throughout the month. They include *How to Scale Your Business - 5 Steps to Business Growth* on July 9, *Boost Your Business with AI - Simple Tools for Success* on July 11, *The Path to a Patent, Part I: IP basics* on July 11, *Mistakes to Avoid When Starting a Business* on July 16, *How to Protect Your Business and Invention Using Trademarks, Patents and Copyrights* on July 18, *The Path to a Patent, Part II: Drafting provisional patent applications* on July 18, *Planning Your Business with the Business Model Canvas* on July 22, *The Path to a Patent, Part III: Patent searching* on July 25, and *Protecting and Growing Your Small to Medium-Sized Business* on July 30.

Technology Training – The TechKnow Lab provided technology training in-person at the Central and virtually throughout the month. Training included *Android Basics* on

July 2, *Android Settings* on July 9, *iPad-iPhone Basics* on July 16, and *iPad-iPhone Settings* on July 23.

Tours and Visits:

Jacob Rachwal provided a tour of the Central Library on July 18 for two employees of the Mental Health Empowerment Project (MHEP) from Albany, NY. **Jacob** has been working with MHEP to finalize details of their *Buffalo Wellness Expo*, which will be held at the Central Library on August 1.

Buffalo Branches:

Elaine M. Panty Branch Programming Highlights:

- The Elaine M. Panty Library partnered with Explore & More to host a Mini Golf Event on Thursday, July 18, as part of our summer programming and our theme of Adventure Begins at your Library. Participants each designed and then built their own mini golf course, which they then had an opportunity to use. Participants were given a ball and a small putter, and they could try out their own design as well as play other participants designs and compare ideas.
- Throughout the month of July, Branch Manager **Stefanie Anawald** hosted a weekly story time and sing along every Tuesday from 10:30 to 11am. There were 103 participants throughout the month, some joining us for the first time. The story time lessons were focused on emotions and behavior, largely featuring the picture books by Jory John. The theme will continue throughout the summer.
- This month, the Bad Art craft night went outside to create unique sidewalk art in front of the library. Participants, including **Stefanie Anawald**, created fun games like hopscotch or drew popular cartoon characters, such as SpongeBob & Patrick and Sully & Mike. The colorful artwork lasted three days before being washed away.
- Mission: Ignite continues to provide a monthly Tech 360 class teaching computer basics to patrons. In July, four participants completed the class and were able to take home a refurbished computer.
- Digital Navigation, also hosted by Mission: Ignite, helped eight patrons throughout the month of July, with various computer and phone questions.
- The monthly meeting of the No-Pressure Book Club, led by **Stefanie Anawald**, met the last Monday in July to discuss what people have been reading. Participants reviewed a variety of genres and had a very lively discussion about what makes something a mystery vs. a thriller (or a police procedural, or a detective mystery, or a cozy mystery, etc.)

Outreach:

The Library on Wheels Bookmobile provided 87 hours of service, traveling nearly 500 miles and servicing 1,665 patrons throughout Erie County. The Library2GO van traveled nearly 600 miles providing services to seniors throughout the County. In addition to regularly scheduled stops, the Library on Wheels Bookmobile participated in the *Bidwell Concert Series* on July 23 in Buffalo, New York State Assemblymember

Karen McMahon’s *Family Health Fair* in partnership with New York State Senator Sean Ryan at the Amherst Senior Center on July 27, and Calvary Baptist Church’s *Annual Community Outreach Day* in Buffalo on July 28.

Chelsey Lonberger and Central Children’s Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** participated in the *EPIC Storytime* held at the Canalside on July 3. **Chelsey** read *Turkey’s Sandtastic Beach Day* by Wendi Silvano to the attendees.

Carol Kowalik-Happy participated in the local chapter of the New York Statewide Senior Action Council, Inc. meeting held at the Harlem Road Community Center in Amherst on July 8. She spoke about library services for seniors. Attendees were interested in the Library2Go van and the Library by Mail service, as well as technology training.

TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brenda Chella**, as part of the B&ECPL’s continuing partnership with Erie County Senior Services’ University Express program, provided technology classes at senior centers throughout the month. They included *The Cloud* at the Orchard Park Senior Center on July 8, *Instacart* at the East Aurora Senior Center on July 10, *Internet Basics* at the Lancaster Senior Center on July 12, and *iPad/iPhone Basics* on July 15 and *iPad/iPhone Settings* on July 22 at the West Seneca Senior Center.

System Youth Outreach Services Librarian Trainee **Amealia Brousseau** and System Youth Outreach Services Library Assistant **Emily McDonald** visited the YMCA Young Explorers Summer Camp in the City of Tonawanda on July 19. Amealia read stories to the campers. Craft bags were provided that contained City of Tonawanda Public Library flyers, library card applications, stickers, and coloring bookmarks.

Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** participated in Concordia Cemetery’s *Family History Day* held at the cemetery in Buffalo on July 20. Attendees learned about community genealogy resources from the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and other local organizations.

Amealia Brousseau and North Park Branch Librarian **Emily Dunn** attended the *Brunch for Bumps* event held at the Foundry in Buffalo on July 28. This event was organized by Calming Nature Doula Service & Center. **Amealia** and **Emily** promoted the *Read Aloud 15 MINUTES National Campaign* and programs provided at the North Park Branch Library.

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	2,818	19,731	311	1,927	518,765
Young Adult Print	406	3,586	78	639	72,084
Adult Print	4,159	28,080	781	5,241	1,778,109

Media	2,506	15,995	309	1,647	527,843
Other*	1,437	12,080	8	233	173,560
Subtotal	11,326	79,472	1,487	9,687	3,070,361

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	5,731	31,562	1,270	9,745	129,904
eAudiobooks	8,710	65,932	359	2,740	71,104
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,344
Subtotal	14,441	97,494	1,629	12,485	206,352

*The B&ECPL also provides access to all *hoopla* eBooks, eAudiobooks, videos, and music albums. These titles are not included in the collection size total, as they are not owned by the B&ECPL.

All Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Total	25,767	176,966	3,116	22,172	3,276,713

Database - The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s subscription to *Consumer Reports* online began on July 1. Patrons can access this resource on the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s Database page at all libraries and remotely.

Digital Collections - The *Maps of the Holland Co’s lands in the late town of Black Rock* has been added to the Digital Collections. The maps were first published in 1864 and contained 8 maps of the original lots and lot owners of areas in and around what was previously the village of Black Rock.

Rare Books and Special Collections - Just Buffalo Literary Center donated past issues of their poetry anthology, *Word Play*, to the Rare Book Collection. Their publications will continue to be collected for the Rare Book Room and Grosvenor Room. Special Collections Intern Andrew Miles is exploring the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s collection of braille materials as well as the history of education for children with visual impairments. His final project will be the creation of an accessible exhibit on the topic, which will be housed in the cases in front of the Grosvenor Room.

3. Fundraising

Fundraising:

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 – July 31, 2024	\$241,056

Highlights:

Give 716 occurred July 15 to July 16. Over 100 library supporters donated online, raising over \$10,000 to support the purchase of new reading materials for all 37 libraries.

Night at the Ballpark was held on July 19. We sold 128 tickets, raising \$2,176 (gross). Proceeds will benefit the 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries.

Save the Date – *Books, Bites & Banter Happy Hour* – a library fundraiser, will once again be hosted at Big Ditch Brewing Company on Wednesday, October 16, from 5:00 to 7:00p.m. More details will follow.

Mass emails sent in July:

Support the Library this July was sent to approximately 80,000 library cardholders who have opted in to receive communication and had a 47% open rate.

Two *Give 716* messages were sent to past donors and library cardholders; they had a 50% open rate.

4. Facilities

On July 10, bids for the Isaiás González-Soto Branch Library HVAC Replacement were unsealed. This was part of a re-bid package due to the amount of the original bids. The lowest bidder was Peterson Heating & Cooling, with a base bid of \$650,000. The City of Buffalo is currently in the process of processing their contract.

On July 11, Library staff met with Erie County Department of Works staff and the team from Watts A/E to discuss the ongoing Central Library Roof Replacement project. This project will replace the current roof and will incorporate a green/vegetative roof and possible solar panel array. Due to current budgeting restrictions, the proposed timeline for the work was restructured, with the project now expected to go to bid in the Fall of 2025 and work to begin in the Spring of 2026.

On July 12, Library maintenance and facility staff met contractors at the Elaine M. Panty Branch Library to discuss proposed improvements at that location. Quotes for the work were requested to use in the drafting of the 2025 City of Buffalo Capital Project Request. Improvements include a new metal roof installation, floor and wall tile replacement, parking lot re-pavement, HVAC replacement, access control system installation, exterior brick repointing, sidewalk repair, main entry door replacement, drywall repair, and interior painting. The Phase 1 portion of the 2025 Capital Request totaled slightly more than \$980,000.

On July 18, Library staff presented the 2025 Erie County Capital Budget Request to the Capital Projects Committee. The \$1 million request would be used to address the failed caulking on marble and granite panels throughout the exterior of the building

envelope (which may contain hazardous material) by removing and replacing the caulk. The caulk joints on the panels are starting to deteriorate, which causes water to infiltrate behind the panels. This causes rusting and failures of anchors that hold up the marble panels. Additional work will include, but is not limited to, building and site wide improvements.

On July 22, Library staff met with City of Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks, and Streets staff via Zoom to discuss the 2025 Capital Project Request for the Elaine M. Panty Branch Library Improvements. This was a general discussion that allowed the Library to explain the project, why it is considered a priority, how much funding the Library would be requesting, and if there would be any additional sources of funding for this project. This capital request funding would be used to leverage additional funding through the New York State Library Construction Aid Program.

On July 24, Library staff met with Erie County DPW staff and Trautman Associates to discuss the Central Library Loading Dock Replacement. The base scope of work for this project was to completely remove the concrete and pour new concrete. Millennium Construction proposed an epoxy coating in lieu of totally removing the existing concrete. After several field visits to observe this epoxy coating at different locations, the Library determined that it would be prudent to proceed with the current base scope of work by pouring new concrete and foregoing the epoxy coating.

On July 26, Library maintenance and facility staff conducted a conference call with Frey Electric, Jade Stone Engineering, Schneider Electric, and others to discuss the Central Library Switchgear Replacement project. During the initial investigation of the switchgear, several issues were discovered related to how the switchgear was originally built. It is believed that another shutdown is necessary to conduct more tests to determine an alternate method of replacing the equipment. This shutdown and any further work on the switchgear will need to be coordinated with National Grid.

5. Staff Development

The Verbal Judo Workshop from Library 2.0 - In the spring we surveyed employees on what topics they most wanted to learn more about. Effective communication came out as the top topic of interest, with working with challenging populations in second. In response to those survey results, in June we offered conflict resolution and de-escalation training through our safety partners at the Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health (WNYCOSH). Staff feedback on those sessions indicated that they liked the interactivity but wished the content included specific methods that could be more readily applied in tough situations. In reaction to those insights, this month we provided *The Verbal Judo Workshop* online class from Library 2.0 to all staff. The session covered step-by-step proven techniques that employees can use to de-escalate conflict and calm challenging patrons. There were 43 registrants for the course, with video access sent to all employees across the system after the event for ongoing use.

Mental Health First Aid Certificate Online Course Partnership - In July we made an exciting new connection with the Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE) through a new online partnership to bring B&ECPL employees more flexible virtual options to earn certification in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), a widely-recognized credential that is accredited by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. MCOE offers free online MHFA courses that are now open to any B&ECPL staff member who is interested in receiving certification for one or both populations: youth and/or adults. Online sessions for the fall are now posted to the Staff Training Calendar on the Staff Intranet, with new dates to be added ongoing as future courses are announced.

Workplace Wellness Engagement Survey for All Employees - The Labor-Management Healthcare Fund (LMHF), B&ECPL's healthcare plan administrators, recently added a variety of new options for workplace wellness to their list of offerings. This marked a good time for us to survey all staff on what kinds of workplace wellness programming they are most like to engage with. The survey ran for most of July and yielded 64 responses from across the system. A notable data point was that employees are largely interested in more options for on-demand online wellness-related classes. We are currently reviewing the full results, with the goal of more targeted wellness programs for all employees as a part of our regular staff development programming.

Webinars - Employees attended a range of webinars and other virtual sessions in July, with multiple staff participating in these offerings: *Empowering Research and Learning: Exploring NOVELny's New Gale Resources* (from Gale and NOVELny), *Learn How to Make a Shared Digital Calendar* (from New York Public Library), *Picture Book Palooza Free Virtual Conference* (from School Library Journal), and *Graphic Novels for All* (from Booklist).

6. Communications

The Graphic's Department produced signage for several Libraries in System including Boston, Kenmore, Lake Shore, Crane, Clearfield, Clarence, North Park, Kenilworth, Hamburg, Audubon, Lancaster, and Lackawanna.

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Email to all media and elected officials	Links to Weekly summer reading library public programs	WBLK, WYRK, and WUFO throughout the month of July.
Recorded TV interview with New York State Parks & Historic Sites at the Central Library	Centennial celebration for New York State Parks	Spectrum News, July 27

The Library System is currently running paid advertising in *Step Out Buffalo*, *Western New York Family Magazine*, *Buffalo Rising* online, *The Buffalo News*, *WUFO*, *WKSE*, *WBLK*, *WYRK*, *Spree Magazine*, *Bee Publications*, *Neighbor to Neighbor* publications in the south towns, and in local theatre playbills.

The *Annual Report of the Director* for 2023 was finalized and printed in July. The Annual Report is posted on the System website and sent to high-end donors, libraries, and elected officials.

Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	113	802	3,631	26,330	10	13,735
Flickr	-	123	2,085	26,241	-	60
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	2,661	18,924	N/A	N/A
Instagram	23	123	5,350	25,546	307	6,441
Pinterest	20	258	81	638	-3	2,051
X(formerly Twitter) ²	65	434	108	2,290	3	10,952
YouTube	2	64	2,636	15,885	7	656
TikTok	-	2	460	2,593	26	778
Total	223	1,806	17,012	118,447	350	34,673

¹ Google Ads is provided to the Library through a grant. Monthly activity based on public clicks.

² Twitter (X) analytics were hand-calculated, as the platform now only offers built-in analytics statistics to premium (paying) users.

7. Partnerships

Challenger Community News - Heather Gring and Susan Buttaccio are collaborating with the Challenger Community News to both promote and develop the yearbook collection, highlight genealogical resources, and bring more attention to the wealth of resources available in the Grosvenor Room, the home of the Special Collections Department at the Central Library.

Erie County Department of Environment and Planning - Dorinda Darden and Linda Rizzo met on July 17, with Michael Kalinka, Erie County *Lending Library of Things (LLOT)* Seasonal Intern. They discussed the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System’s collaboration with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning’s *LLOT Project Initiative*. Plans are underway to have the Central Library serve as the pilot library for this initiative.

Goodwill of Western New York - Jacob Rachwal met with Arlen Boyer, Community Outreach Liaison from Goodwill of Western New York. Arlen shared information on their *Goodskills Career Builder* program. He provided flyers for distribution to all Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries. He also expressed interest in taking part in future *Wellness @ Central* and *Job Fair* events.

United Way of Buffalo & Erie County - Chelsey Lonberger attended meetings on July 9 and 24 about the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County's *Starting Line Thrive By 5 Coalition*.

System Services staff were also in contact or attended meetings with representatives of the following groups and organizations:

- **Buffalo Museum of Science**
- **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra**
- **Creative Small Business Symposium Committee**
- **Help Me Grow WNY**
- **Hennepin County Library in Minnesota**
- **Jump Start**
- **Ladders to the Outdoors**
- **Liftoff WNY**
- **Mission: Ignite**
- **New York State Library**
- **OLV Human Services**
- **State University of New York at Buffalo (UB)**
- **Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Committees**
- **YMCA Young Explorers Summer Camp**

8. Planning for the Future

The Special Collections Department will host Doug Ruffin, the documentary filmmaker behind the Buffalo History Channel, to present on *Buffalo Stories: Buffalo History Channel* in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library on September 15.

Many rolls of film from the Grosvenor Room's microfilmed newspaper collection are being prepared to ship to Newspapers.com for digitization. Once complete, patrons of the Central Library will be allowed free access to all items from these collections, as well as materials from the Buffalo History Museum, on newspapers.com.

9. Director Activities

List of Meetings and Events

Attended by Director John Spears

July 2024

DATE	MEETING / EVENT
July 1, 2024	Interview - Marketing Manager
July 1, 2024	Meeting - Chris Hawley, Central Terminal Neighborhood Association
July 2, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
July 2, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
July 2, 2024	Meeting - Isaías González-Soto Library Restoration - Phase 2 (TA 21027)

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

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July 3, 2024	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Budget Discussion with Emily Patronik, et al. - Multibranch Members Libraries
July 3, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
July 3, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
July 5, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
July 8, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
July 8, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Steering Committee - 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition
July 8, 2024	Virtual Meeting - American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee
July 8, 2024	Meeting - FY2025 Personnel Requests
July 9, 2024	Meeting - Staff Forum Planning
July 9, 2024	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Budget Discussion with Emily Patronik, et al. - Northtown Member Libraries
July 9, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
July 11, 2024	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Budget Discussion with Emily Patronik, et al. - Smaller Member Libraries
July 11, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees - Executive Committee
July 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Budget Discussion with Emily Patronik, et al. - Southtowns
July 12, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
July 15, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
July 15, 2024	Meeting - Personnel Matters
July 15, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
July 16, 2024	Meeting - ErieNet, LDC Board of Directors
July 18, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib 2024 Conference Planning Committee
July 18, 2024	Presentation - Erie County Capital Projects Committee
July 18, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
July 19, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
July 19, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
July 22, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team/B&ECPL Budget Discussion
July 22, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Libraries Capital Budget 2025 Discussion
July 23, 2024	Meeting - Erie County Officials Re: People Experiencing Homelessness
July 23, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik and Joy Testa Cinquino
July 23, 2024	Interview - Marketing Manager
July 23, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
July 25, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden and Samantha Purpora
July 25, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik

July 25, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
July 25, 2024	Event - Boston Summer Jamboree
July 26, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
July 26, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
July 26, 2024	Meeting - Travel Policy Review with Erin Vest, et al.
July 26, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
July 26, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
July 31, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
July 31, 2024	Meeting - Buffalo Libraries Budget with Emily Patronik and Sam Purpora

Appendices
A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	1032	6878	2518	23009
Children 5 and under	1691	9740	6285	36459
Children 6-11	2368	11516	4826	23570
Intergenerational/Combined	4628	33411	14481	75831
Teens	385	2669	878	4669
Regular Total	10104	64214	28988	163537
Regular Total	10104	64214	28988	163537
Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	12	110	77	1216
Children 5 and under	0	1	0	12
Children 6-11	0	3	0	96
Intergenerational/Combined	5	35	86	576
Teens	3	57	3	125
Live Virtual Total	20	206	166	2025
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	0	35	0	877
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	13	186	1729
Intergenerational/Combined	10	67	911	5544
Teens	0	0	0	0
Recorded Virtual Total	12	115	1097	8150
Virtual Total	32	321	1263	10175
Grand Total	10136	64535	30251	173712

*Regular programs include group programs, one-on-one programs, and self-directed programs (including individual take & make crafts).

Other Statistics:

Consolidated statistics on library visits, website visits, circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and program attendance and a summary of open hours can be found at www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics.

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and library visits can be found at <https://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2024-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail>.

B. Contracting Library Activity Reports

Marilla Free Library – submitted by Shannon Thompson, Director

Highlights of events and activities at the Marilla Free Library:

- We started an exciting summer on July 10 with a fun family program **Secrets of the Animal World Revealed presented by Mark Carra FasciNature**. Families learned about a variety of living creatures, which included an African Lungfish and a snake with legs.
- Programs and events for the summer reflected the *Adventure Begins at Your Library* theme. For Preschoolers ages 3 to 5, we had **Adventures Outside: Camping** and **Adventures around the World: Food** during this event children made simple candy sushi. We tried a variety of food from around the world in our **Travel the World through Food** program for children ages 6 to 13. We also had a fun **Glow Paint Party** for our tween and teen patrons.
- We encourage children to read all summer by joining our **1000 Minutes of Summer** independent reading program. Children keep track of time spent reading in their reading logs, and earned small prizes.
- For the second year, we offered a **Teen Summer Reading Challenge**. Teens receive an adventure game board to track the hours they read. They receive great prizes at five checkpoints on the game board.
- New this year, we offered a **Bingo Reading Program** for adults. When adults have their first bingo they receive a small prize. For adults who complete every space on the board, they are entered to win a grand prize.
- We have several exciting programs that will be taking place in August, which include **Adventures in Space**, for preschoolers, **Star Wars Jedi Academy** for children ages 5 to 12 and **I Survived the Library** for children 6 to 13. On August 6 we will have the **Zoomobile: World Safari**, a family program presented by the Buffalo Zoo.

- We are also helping to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Smokey Bear, by participating in the **Smokey Bear Reading Challenge** this summer.
- We are collecting books and preparing for the Friends of the Marilla Free Library annual book sale which takes place October 4 and 5.
- Marilla Free Library Book Club will meet in September after taking a break for the summer.

B&ECPL Monthly Report August 2024

Central Library Adult Hang Out – On August 3, Central Adult Services Manager **Maria Lowe** hosted the New Adult Hangout. After several months of meeting, the participants decided to make this group a book discussion and craft club. This was the first meeting after the change. The group read and discussed *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern and made fantasy-themed light-up pictures of jars based on a concept in the book.



Battle of the Books - The 25th Annual *Battle of the Books*, a reading trivia competition for those entering grades six to nine, was held virtually from August 19 through August 21. The libraries that participated included the Audubon Branch Library (two teams), Boston Free Library, the Leroy R. Coles Jr. Branch Library and Crane Branch Library in Buffalo, Elma Public Library (two teams), Grand Island Memorial Library, Kenmore Branch Library, Lancaster Public Library (two teams), and Orchard Park Public Library. All participants read three books, *Ghostlight* by Kenneth Oppel, *Elatsoe* by Darcie Little Badger, and *Aru Shah and the End of Time* by Roshani Chokshi. The Grand Island Memorial Library's team, coached by Librarians **Marie Volpe** and **Stephanie Pritchard**, won the competition. They received medals and a trophy for the Library to keep. The second place team was from the Buffalo Branches, coached by Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Manager **Danielle Ptak**. They also received medals. This year's two art contest winners were awarded to siblings Clark and Kara Rude of Buffalo, winning first and second place respectively. All teams were invited to the *Battle of the Books Field Day* held at the Audubon Branch on August 24. System Youth Outreach Services Librarian Trainee **Amealia Brousseau** and System Youth Outreach Services Library Assistant **Emily McDonald** facilitated the event. There were 175 attendees who were treated to treats, prizes, crafts, and game stations. The System Youth Outreach Services staff welcomed staff and volunteers throughout the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System who assisted at the event.

Buffalo Wellness Expo - System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** worked with the Mental Health Empowerment Project (MHEP) to organize their *Buffalo Wellness Expo* held at the Central Library on August 1. Representatives from over 40 agencies participated in the event. They shared resources with the 200 people in attendance. Attendees were also able to take part in free chair massages and spend time in the "Zen Room" to relax.

German Americans and WWI: How the War Affected the People and their Culture - Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** hosted Bonnie Fleischauer, the Public Information Officer of the Friends of the Concordia Cemetery Foundation, for a presentation held in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library on August 24.

Job Fair - **Jacob Rachwal** organized a *Job Fair* at the Central Library in partnership with the New York State Department of Labor. There were 60 vendors, and over 500 attended the event held on August 28.

Online Summer Reading Contest - Throughout the summer, System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Melissa Blattner** coordinated the *Online Summer Reading Contest*, which ran from June 1 to August 13 for children, teens, and adults. There were 167 children who recorded a total of 82,832 minutes read, 28 teens who provided 326 reviews, and 142 adults who provided 858 reviews of the books they read throughout the summer. There were participants from 34 or our 37 libraries. Each participating library had one winner randomly selected to receive an Amazon Gift Card. In addition, a children's, adult, and teen grand prize winner were randomly selected. The children's grand prize winner was Samuel Roycroft from the Grand Island Memorial Library, the teen grand prize winner was McKenna Barrett from the Elma Public Library, and the adult grand prize winner was Marilyn Marong from the Clarence Public Library. They won either Magna-Tiles or gift cards. The system-wide **Adventure is Out There** Summer Reading contest, created by the Development & Communications Department, featured weekly winners throughout July and August for prizes, including a KIDZ BOP LIVE Concert Package and passes or gift cards to the Erie County Fair, Theatre of Youth, Science Museum, Buffalo Bisons, Anderson's, and Buffalo Book Arts, and more. The grand prize included a tent, sleeping bag, smore's maker, outdoor lantern, and tote bag. More than 1,500 people entered through the system's social media accounts, Survey Monkey, and in-library entry forms. The contest was managed by Development Clerk **Melissa Burgess**.

Reading Park Summer Music Series - Uncertain August weather drove a couple dates inside the Library, but the music was wonderful nonetheless! Nice-sized crowds enjoyed an eclectic array of live performances from the Buffalo Infringement Festival on August 3; the dramatic JGB Shibuki Drummers on August 10; mesmerizing Family Funktion & the Sitar Jams on August 17; and the salsa sounds of Sol y Sombra on August 24. The series was coordinated by Manager of Community Engagement **Anne Conable**.

1. Public Services

Central Library:

On August 15 - In collaboration with the Pride Center of WNY, Technology Clerk **Amanda Brown** hosted a Cricut Certification Class for 17 attendees who learned how to safely use the machine and had the opportunity to make pre-designed stickers. The Pride Center advertised the class via their social media and calendar of events, which helped reach folks that might not have come to the library otherwise.

Central Children's Services - Summer reading wrapped up in August with the very successful End of Summer Reading Party! Staff gave out books and had activities for kids to do out on the ramp of the library where there was music, a bubble party, balloon animals, and other activities. Over 200 people enjoyed the festivities. Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** wrapped up her Magic Tree House Book Club with attendees making papyrus paper and engaging in other activities around the first three Magic Treehouse books. The summer performer series on Thursdays wrapped up with the acts Chris Johnson and Spoon Man. The attendance across all our Thursday Summer Performer events totals over 570 this year over five events!

System Services:

Displays and Exhibits - **Susan Buttaccio** worked with intern Andrew Miles to install a new exhibit, *The Development of Braille and a History of Education for the Blind and Visually Impaired in America*. Andrew's internship was coordinated through Visually Impaired Advancement (VIA), a group whose mission is "to assist people who are visually impaired to achieve their highest level of independence." Andrew, a History major at Buffalo State University, researched the life of Louis Braille and curated an exhibit featuring early braille publications and other information about education for the visually impaired from Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's Special Collections. The exhibit, installed on August 23, is located outside the Grosvenor Room.

Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** set up a new display in the Mark Twain Room on August 26 titled *Mini Mark, or Mark Twain in miniature*. It features miniature books in the Rare Book Room that are by or about Twain, including a recent purchase of a 2-volume edition of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Genealogy Training - Genealogist Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** presented an online presentation about the Grosvenor Room's genealogy sources to the Allen County Public Library (ACPL) in Indiana on August 27. The ACPL is one of the largest genealogy libraries in the United States. There were 52 genealogists in attendance. This presentation was in exchange for a program by Elizabeth Hodges, an ACPL librarian who presented about their library's online and in-person collections on August 14.

It Takes a Village (ITAV) Action Organization Graduation Ceremony - Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** continues to work with Dr. Beverly Newkirk,

Executive Director of ITAV. The organization works to find employment for formerly incarcerated individuals and other at-risk populations in Buffalo. **Andrew** participated in ITAV's *Graduation Ceremony* held at the Central Library on August 29. Eleven graduates received certificates of recognition from local, county, and state elected officials. Phenomenal Ladies of Rhythm provided a musical performance. After the ceremony, attendees, which also included family and friends of the graduates, celebrated with a potluck meal.

Technology Training – The TechKnow Lab began providing one-on-one technology assistance at the *Tech Help Desk* near the computer area at the Central Library on August 5. This service will be provided twice a week on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

WNY History Resources, Here and Abroad –Special Collections Librarian **Adam Rubin** conducted a webinar on digital resources for *Western New York History Resources, Here and Abroad* on August 16.

Tours and Visits:

Charles Alaimo provided information about Grosvenor Room resources to a group of visiting Girl Scouts on buildings tour given by staff of the Children's Room on August 6 and on August 13. He also provided a tour of the Mark Twain Room for Edward and Eve Lemon, Book Collectors and presenters of their own Fine Book Fairs, including the upcoming *Buffalo Rare Book Fair* on October 25-26.

Susan Buttaccio provided the monthly Special Collections tour on August 24 to patrons interested in the history of the library and the Grosvenor Room's collections.

Charles Alaimo conducted a tour of the Grosvenor Room and presentation of local resources to Clarence High School History teachers on August 28. He also provided information on the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's digital sources and the many items relating to the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo.

Buffalo Branches:

Coles Programming Highlights:

- The Coles Library meetings for the City Branch Battle of the Books Team occurred on August 3, 10, and 17. The combined City Branch team, including Crane kids coached by Branch Manager **Caroline Kennon** and Coles' kids coached by Library Manager **Danielle Ptak**, held a scrimmage on August 19 and had their final battle on August 20. After the final battle, team members had a chance to decorate their team shirts for the upcoming field day. The City Branch team placed second for the trivia portion of the competition, and members of the City team placed first and second in the Art competition!
- The Coles Library hosted Buffalo Public School Summer Lunches on weekdays ending August 16. The branch served 77 lunches in August and a grand total of 244 lunches for the summer.

- Tuesdays were All-Day Drop-in Craft days for all ages at the Coles Library.
- Mondays were Family Movie day at the Coles Library.
- Saturday, August 10, had the Coles Library hosting Arts for Learning Kung-Fu Workshop. Attendees learned the stories behind the ancient forms and learned a sequence of movements to perform.
- The Coles monthly Lego Club, run by Tech Clerk **Cat O'Connell**, met on August 23. Participants created one-of-a-kind Lego creations, which are now on display in Coles' Children's Area.

Outreach:

Mobile Services Librarian **Jennifer Block** and Mobile Services Senior Page **Loch McLaughlin** attended the *EPIC* (Every Person Influences Children) *Storytime* at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in Buffalo on August 10. There were 25 attendees who visited the Library on Wheels Bookmobile during the event.

Mobile Services Librarian Trainee **Susan Blake** and Mobile Services Senior Page **Olivia Adams** attended the Kenmore Farmers Market on August 11. There were 185 attendees who visited the Library on Wheels Bookmobile throughout the day.

Jennifer Block and **Olivia Adams** attended the *36th Annual Taking it to the Streets* event at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park on August 17. The family focused, anti-violence celebration featured live performances from local and national artists, community partners and food vendors, as well as the Buffalo Museum of Science's children's activities and school supply giveaways.

Andrew Maines and **Olivia Adams** attended the West Side Community Service's *4th Annual Rock the Block* event in Buffalo on August 21. The community event featured tabling from community partners, face painting, food trucks, the AKG Art Truck, a foam party, obstacle courses, mini golf, flower bouquet arranging, and much more.

Andrew Maines and **Loch McLaughlin** attended the *6th Annual Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) Community BBQ* on August 24. Various organizations provided tabling at the event. Face painting, Star Wars and superhero cosplayers from the Justice League of WNY, and food were also provided. There were 85 attendees who visited the Library on Wheels Bookmobile, checked out library materials, and applied for library cards.

Amealia Brousseau provided a *Storytime* that including a craft for Just for Kids Summer Camp at the Union East location in Cheektowaga on August 1, the Amherst location on August 7, and the Williamsville location on August 8.

TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline Hovey** and TechKnow Lab Library Assistant **Isabell Berger** attended the *National Health Center Week Celebration*, which was held at the Community Health Center of Buffalo on August 7. They brought materials about library programs and services as well as the button maker. They had 213 people of all ages visit their table, with several applying for library cards.

System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** and Central Children's Services Manager **Dan Lewandowski** visited the Buffalo Public School (BPS) #45 International School for their *Community Day* on August 7. They read *Monster Hands* by Jonaz McMillan and *That is Not My Name* by Anoosha Syed to children who have only been in the United States for six months or less. Translators also translated the stories in Arabic, Bangladeshi, Dari, French, Pashto, Spanish, and Swahili.

Chelsey Lonberger and **Emily McDonald** participating in the *National Night Out* event at the William Emslie YMCA on August 7. They provided tabling and crafts for the summer camp.

Jacob Rachwal attended a *Senior Resource Fair* at Gerard Place in Buffalo on August 9. He provided information on library resources, such as Libby and Hoopla and Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's Health databases. Library card applications were also collected, and healthy living books were distributed thanks to donations from Project Flight.

Jacob Rachwal worked with UB HEALS to arrange a *Narcan/CPR Training* for patrons and staff held at the Central Library on August 9. Many medical students were on hand to provide the training. Giveaways were also provided for those in attendance. System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** presented at SCORE's *Starting and Managing Your Own Business*, which was held at the West Side Bazaar in Buffalo on August 10. In addition to providing information on small business resources available at the library, **Carol** also issued ten new library cards. She has been invited to present again at the next *Starting and Managing Your Own Business* workshop on October 26 at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute.

Melissa Blattner, **Jacob Rachwal**, **Amealia Brousseau**, and **Emily McDonald** staffed an information table in the Marketplace building at the *184th Annual Erie County Fair* at the Hamburg Fairgrounds on August 10 and August 17. The library staff greeted over 1,000 fair attendees. They provided information on library programs and resources such as Libby and Hoopla and distributed reading material thanks to donations from Project Flight.

Chelsey Lonberger and **Emily McDonald** participated in the Buffalo Autism Project's *Resource Fair* on August 11. They promoted library programs and services.

Emily McDonald and **Danielle Ptak** attended the *Good for the Neighborhood* event at the Westminster Community Charter School in Buffalo on August 14. They spoke to over 120 attendees about Libby and Hoopla and Health and Wellness information provided by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System, as well as promoted programs and services at the Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Library.

Susan Buttaccio, Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring**, and **Adam Rubin** tabled at the *Friday Night Live* event held on Jefferson Avenue in Buffalo on August 23. They shared information about the *5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition*. Those who stopped by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's table learned about the

Coalition's *5/14 Oral History Project* and explored the new Oral History kits available to be checked out in the Grosvenor Room. Giveaways and craft activities were also provided. On August 24, **Heather Gring** distributed flyers at the *Funk Fest* on Jefferson Avenue about the Oral History kits and the *5/14 Oral History Project*, and **Susan Buttaccio** attended the *Funk Fest* at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in Buffalo on August 25 to share similar information. Giveaways and craft activities were also provided. **Heather Gring** and Assistant Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden** also provided tabling and giveaways at the *Friday Night Live* event on August 30.

Emily McDonald and **Danielle Ptak** attended a *Back to School* event at Buffalo Public School #54 Dr. George E. Blackman Early Childhood Center on August 28. They promoted library programs and services to over 160 attendees.

Chelsey Lonberger attended the *Dolly Parton Imagination Library* event held at the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County on August 28. **Chelsey** brought some book titles that were used for photos of elected officials with the titles. She was also interviewed by WGRZ TV Channel 2 News.

Carol Kowalik-Happy presented on library resources for small business at The Exchange at Beverly Gray in Buffalo on August 29. The students have been attending an eight-week, Minority- and/or Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) New York State Certification program.

Dudley Branch Manager Angelina DiMascio and **Library Assistant Ana Sennett** attended the South Buffalo's Farmer's Market for their Kids Day Event on August 11. 74 people from the community stopped by their table, and they handed out their calendar of events flyers, buttons, take & make crafts, information about the VIP Pass program, and more!

The Dudley Branch Library attended the National Night Out event hosted by The Ithaca Street Coalition, a neighborhood association in South Buffalo, on August 13. Both **Angelina DiMascio** and Clerk Typist **Beata Yamin** attended the event. **Angelina** provided resources about the library's community pantry, and **Beata** assisted at the event. Thank you to all the neighbors for their generous donations to the Dudley Library's Community Pantry!

Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Manager **Danielle Ptak** and System Youth Outreach Library Assistant **Emily McDonald** set up a button-making table at Good for the Neighborhood, a back-to-school health fair hosted by Westminster Community Charter School in collaboration with Independent Health on August 14. The event was well-attended and offered free haircuts and backpacks with school supplies for attendees along with all the activities provided by visiting organizations. 124 People visited the library's table and over 100 buttons were made.

Danielle Ptak and **Emily McDonald** tabled at BPS School 54's Back-to-School event on August 28. **Emily** and **Danielle** talked to 157 attendees about signing up for library cards and attending free library programs in the area.

Danielle Ptak and Merriweather Branch Librarian **Heather Bermingham** attended “Reddy Freddy,” a back-to-school event for Harvey Austin School. 62 people visited the Library’s table, and about 75 buttons were made.

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	2,079	21,810	177	2,104	517,819
Young Adult Print	1,066	4,652	117	756	71,722
Adult Print	3,678	31,758	738	5,979	1,775,836
Media	2,074	18,069	216	1,863	526,453
Other*	1,864	13,944	2	235	171,956
Subtotal	10,761	90,233	1,250	10,937	3,063,786

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	3,439	35,001	1,290	11,035	129,570
eAudiobooks	6,291	72,223	392	3,132	69,466
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,489
Subtotal	9,730	107,224	1,682	14,167	204,525

*The B&ECPL also provides access to all *hoopla* eBooks, eAudiobooks, videos, and music albums. These titles are not included in the collection size total, as they are not owned by the B&ECPL.

All Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Total	20,491	197,457	2,932	25,104	3,268,311

Digital Collections – *Diary of Mary M. Hamilton* digitization is complete. **Adam Rubin** uploaded a previously digitized scrapbook on the Buffalo Public Library’s Children’s Department, beginning with its inception in the 1890s up to the late 1960s.

Rare Books and Special Collections - **Charles Alaimo** catalogued two new collections of Native American genealogy material. The *Iroquois Census Project* (1851-1902) and the *Kansas Claims, 1839-1906* are duplicate documents donated to **Rhonda Hoffman** by Jack Ericson, retired archivist from State University of New York (SUNY) at Fredonia. The Grosvenor Room received a small donation of primarily Argentinian pop and folk LPs, which were catalogued by **Charles Alaimo** and put together as a display by **Adam Rubin** in advance of *Hispanic Heritage Month*. Special Collections Librarian **Elizabeth (Libby) Stengel** evaluated numerous yearbook donations for integration into the

collection. **Charles Alaimo** and Special Collections Library Clerk **Nataliia Salansky** catalogued and processed the yearbooks. **Libby** also updated the Yearbooks Guide to reflect acquisitions to collections housed at the Angola Public Library, Dudley Branch Library, Eden Library, Lancaster Public Library, and the West Seneca Public Library since 2020.

3. Funding/Fundraising

Funding:

2025 Budget request submitted on time- Between supply chain and other inflationary factors, costs are forecast to increase significantly faster than in recent years. The combined impact of recently settled Erie County labor agreements and another expected minimum wage increase will also have an effect on expenses. We are seeing increases in other operating accounts, as well. Overall, net expenses are expected to increase approximately \$1.6 million (4.8%).

Feedback from the County Budget office to date has been supportive. The next major 2025 budget event is the release of the County Executive's Proposed Budget, expected in mid-October of 2024.

We will keep you informed as the budget process continues.

Fundraising:

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 - August 31, 2024	\$248,875.26

Highlights:

Bucks for Books annual mailer was designed and will be sent to 10,000 households, including past donors and a purchased list. Mailing will be sent in September.

Save the Date - *Books, Bites & Banter Happy Hour* will once again be hosted at Big Ditch Brewing Company, on Wednesday, October 16 from 5 pm to 7pm. Tickets are \$30 presale/\$35 at the door. Admission includes 2 drink tickets and light snacks. This is a 21 and over event. Proceeds will benefit the Library's *Bucks for Books* campaign. Contact Maureen Germaine at 716-858-7197 for details.

4. Facilities

Graphics Manager **Dawn Stanton** and Assistant **Darlene Pennachi** had a busy summer working on many projects at the Central Library and system-wide including: creating *Central Library's 60th Anniversary* logo, installing wall décor in the Teen space, updating library hours information, producing numerous programming flyers, and designing and producing the narrative panels for the upcoming Rare Books 101 exhibit, which will open on Thursday, September 19. They also designed ads for WNY

Family Magazine, Bee Publications, Spree, Kids Out and About online, and a Buffalo Bills program. Library signage was produced for Kenmore, Kenilworth, Lake Shore, Clarence, Lancaster, and West Seneca.

5. Staff Development

Staff Development For You Newsletter Hits Tenth Issue Milestone - Back in March, we launched a new email newsletter called *Staff Development For You*. The goal of this internal communication is to keep all staff informed on a variety of learning opportunities, as well as required training notices, other related news, and updates. On August 1, the tenth issue was delivered to the entire organization, with another issue shipping on August 27. Newly added this month was a brief Q/A survey for readers to provide quick feedback; survey respondents so far have reported an overall satisfaction rating with the publication of 8.92/10. We will continue to release new issues and use reader insights to improve the content and quality of each newsletter ongoing.

Staff Training Calendar on Staff Intranet Back in Full Swing - Due to pandemic-related disruptions, the Staff Training Calendar has been fairly dormant for some time prior to this year. Since the beginning of 2024, significant effort has gone into reenergizing the calendar to be an active and trusted place for all employees to look for a range of learning offerings. In August there were 29 posts to the calendar, an eclectic mix of professional development happenings for staff in all roles. So far in September, there are already 58 posts--truly something for everyone! We will continue to add an assortment of options to the calendar from trusted providers, as well as post our own in-house programming. The calendar is promoted in the *Staff Development For You* newsletter and other internal communications, encouraging employees to use it regularly as a reliable one-stop-shop for relevant, timely, and exciting things to learn about.

Planning for the Remainder of 2024 - Over the summer, much has been in the works to plan staff development programming for the remainder of 2024. We now have in place the following programs for all employees to take us through the end of this year:

- **Fall Into Financial Wellness Week:** An online series from Corebridge Financial (September)
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Disability Awareness Training:** An overview session with in-person and virtual options presented by Erie County (October)
- **"Words in the Workplace" Communication Wellness Series;** A six-part online series from eviCore EAP (October - December)
- **Virtual Meditation Series:** Ten class options provided by New York Public Library Online (September - December)

Webinars - Staff attended a variety of webinars and other online sessions in August, with several employees participating in these sessions, all of which were promoted on our internal Staff Training Calendar and our *Staff Development For You* newsletter: *Civic*

Holidays in Action (from NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org), *Setting Appropriate Boundaries Without Writing Anyone Off* (from Niche Academy), *Canva: A Beginners Guide to Designing Graphics Like a Pro* (from Tech-Talk), and *Strengthening Your Communication Skills* (from Niche Academy).

6. Communications

Advocacy:

Assistant Deputy Director **Joy Testa Cinquino** is working with Sheryl Knab from the Western New York Library Resources Council on a presentation to prepare for advocacy meetings with elected officials. The program will be offered to library staff and boards via Zoom.

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Taped TV interview with Central Children’s Librarian Dan Lewandowski	End of summer carnival and the importance of summer reading	WKBW TV Channel 7, August 14 and 15.
Media Release	Central Library’s Job Fair	August 14 and August 28
Media Release	<i>Battle of the Books</i> 2024 winners	August 30
Media inquiry with John Spears	Follow up to previous (2022) stories about the potential for ECC and the library system to work together	<i>The Buffalo News</i>
Media inquiry	Clearfield Library book recycle bins	WIVB TV Channel 4

Library Director John Spears Honored! Congratulations to Library Director John Spears! John is the 2024 winner of the Mary Bobinski Innovative Public Library Director Award. John will be honored for his excellence in leadership and in advocacy at the upcoming New York Library Association (NYLA) Conference in Syracuse this November.

Sean Piazza has been hired as the new Marketing Manager in the Development & Communications Department. **Sean** has a strong background in strategic communications, branding, public relations and media marketing.

Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	88	890	1,184	27,514	33	13,768
Flickr	-	123	1,922	28,163	-1	59
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	2,666	21,590	N/A	N/A

Instagram	20	143	4,378	29,924	120	6,561
Pinterest	45	303	134	772	1	2,052
X(formerly Twitter) ²	48	482	79	2,369	-7	10,945
YouTube	3	67	4,238	20,123	21	677
TikTok	2	4	1,010	3,603	37	815
Total	206	2,012	15,611	134,058	204	34,877

¹ Google Ads is provided to the Library through a grant. Monthly activity based on public clicks.

² Twitter (X) analytics were hand-calculated, as the platform now only offers built-in analytics statistics to premium (paying) users.

7. Partnerships

Children’s Centers in the Courts - Chelsey Lonberger attended the Children's Centers in the Courts *Advisory Board* meeting at the Erie County Family Court on August 13. The board supports children when their guardians have court appearances. The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library donates picture books for kids to this organization. While there, she spoke on the possibility of getting a grant to provide more targeted books. These books would represent struggles the children may be currently facing.

Erie County Historical Commission - Susan Buttaccio attended the first meeting of the Erie County Historical Commission held on August 12. As a commissioner, **Susan** will be working with other community volunteers and representatives of cultural heritage organizations to make recommendations to the Erie County Executive to assist in the preservation and promotion of the history of Erie County, its communities, and population.

System Services staff were also in contact or attended meetings with representatives of the following groups and organizations:

- **5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition**
- **Buffalo Museum of Science**
- **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra**
- Buffalo Toronto Public Media
- **Child Care Resource Network**
- **Every Person Influences Children (EPIC)**
- **Help Me Grow WNY**
- **IBERO Business Center - WNY in Niagara Falls**
- **Live Well Erie**
- **Ladders to the Outdoors**
- **Liftoff WNY**
- **New York State Department of Civil Service**
- **State University of New York at Buffalo (UB)**
- **Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Committees**

8. Planning for the Future

Indie Author Day – Saturday, November 2 at Central Library
Central Library's 60th Anniversary – Friday, October 18

Adam Rubin is currently working with Information Technology Administrator **Stephen Hovey** to update the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s Digital Collections site with a new visual theme and other improvements.

Chelsey Lonberger attended a virtual coffee session on August 8 with Kim Stewart, Director of Early Childhood - Help Me Grow Western New York (HMGWNY) and Positive Emotional Development and Learning Skills (PEDALS). These two organizations are linked through various employees. They discussed future collaborations including a potential grant for *Book, Balls and Block* events, which Help Me Grow is currently providing at NIOGA Libraries. This interactive parent event helps with childhood development.

Carol Kowalik-Happy met virtually with Leigh Mikovich, Partnerships Manager for Library Speakers Consortium & BookBreak on August 12 to discuss the *Library Speakers Consortium*. The consortium offers two to three *Bestselling Author Talk* events livestreamed every month to patrons of the participating library systems. The events are also archived, and can be accessed by all patrons. Libraries could also provide programming, such as book clubs, around authors that were presenting or have presented in the past and offer an offsite program to partners such as senior centers and nursing homes. Once the library system subscribes to the consortium, there is no limit on the number of people who can watch the live event or the recorded events. The *Library Speakers Consortium* is subscription based and would cost the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System \$12,500 a year based on the library’s budget and the number of library cardholders. This is being explored to see if funding is available to provide the service.

9. Director Activities

Meetings and Events

Attended by Director John Spears

August 2024

DATE	MEETING / EVENT
August 1, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Buffalo Cultural Leaders
August 1, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik and Andrew Wiede re: City Capital Projects
August 1, 2024	Meeting - Jacqueline Hovey re: Mission Ignite
August 1, 2024	Phone Meeting - Monica Boutin
August 2, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik re: Department Budget
August 5, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team

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August 5, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Mission Ignite
August 6, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
August 6, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib 2024 Censorship Session Planning
August 6, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Visioning Planning Session with Mary Beth Debus of Program Savvy Consulting
August 6, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
August 7, 2024	Meeting - Judy Fachko re: M&C Salary Survey
August 7, 2024	Meeting - Central Library Space Utilization Study Working Group
August 7, 2024	Meeting - Librarians Association Negotiations
August 7, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
August 8, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
August 8, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
August 8, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees: Executive Committee
August 9, 2024	Meeting - County Budget Officers with Emily Patronik and Tracy Palicki re: 2024 Year-End Projections and 2025 Budget
August 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib 2024 Conference Planning Committee
August 12, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
August 12, 2024	Meeting - Librarians Association Negotiations
August 13, 2024	Meeting - Tara Kaye and Judy Fachko re: B&ECPL Leadership & Organization Development
August 13, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
August 13, 2024	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
August 13, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
August 15, 2024	Meeting - Budget and Finance Committee
August 15, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib Standing Committee
August 15, 2024	Virtual Meeting - M&C Salary Study
August 15, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
August 15, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors
August 15, 2024	Event - WNYLRC Open House
August 16, 2024	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC re: NYLA Library Advocacy and Lobbyist Contract
August 16, 2024	Meeting - Pat Burke, New York State Assemblymember
August 16, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
August 19, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
August 20, 2024	Meeting - ErieNet, LDC Audit and Finance Committee
August 20, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
August 21, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
August 27, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora

August 27, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Contract Library Directors re: Budget Process
August 27, 2024	Virtual Meeting - SUNY Empire State
August 27, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
August 29, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
August 30, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
August 30, 2024	Meeting - Librarians Association Negotiations
August 30, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino

Appendices
C. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	1123	8001	3564	26573
Children 5 and under	1794	11534	5263	41722
Children 6-11	2448	13964	8284	31854
Intergenerational/Combined	5001	38412	13346	89177
Teens	513	3182	1120	5788
Regular Total	10879	75093	31577	195114
Regular Total	10879	75093	31577	195114
Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	15	125	305	1521
Children 5 and under	2	3	36	48
Children 6-11	2	5	90	186
Intergenerational/Combined	6	41	236	812
Teens	14	71	48	173
Live Virtual Total	39	245	715	2740
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	3	38	67	944
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	15	253	1982
Intergenerational/Combined	7	74	907	6451
Teens	0	0	0	0
Recorded Virtual Total	12	127	1227	9377
Virtual Total	51	372	1942	12117
Grand Total	10930	75465	33519	207231

*Regular programs include group programs, one-on-one programs, and self-directed programs (including individual take & make crafts).

Other Statistics:

Consolidated statistics on library visits, website visits, circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and program attendance and a summary of open hours can be found at www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics.

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and library visits can be found at <https://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2024-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail>.

D. Contracting Library Activity Reports

Angola Public Library – submitted by Jennifer Page, Director

- **Animal Adventures** - This summer we hosted many animal presentations. Among them we welcomed Prehistoric World and Mark Carra's Fascinature. These programs were open to all ages and our community had a lot of fun learning about and handling many new and different animals.
- **Smokey Bear 80th Birthday and Wilderness Safety Program** – We are pleased to partner with the USDA Forest Service to celebrate Smokey Bear's 80th birthday by joining the Smokey Bear Reading Challenge. Children participated in fire prevention activities to win prizes. We also joined with the Niagara Parks Department to present a program on camping and outdoor safety.
- **Centennial Celebration Dinner** – We are looking forward celebrating our 100th year anniversary as a public library on October 19th at the Evans Center Fire Hall. Tickets are available at the library. All are welcome to join us as we learn about the history of the Angola Public Library and enjoy a catered dinner along with live music and raffles.
- **Halloween Fun Night** – The library will be hosting a fun and safe Halloween event on October 23rd with crafts, trivia, games and a prize drawing for both children and adults. Since 2020 this has become an annual event with attendance growing every year.

Clarence Public Library – submitted by Monica Mooney, Director

Growing with Others Neurodivergent Teen Social Group – This program is made possible by a partnership between the Clarence Public Library and the Clarence Central School District Family Support Center and meets one evening per month at the Clarence Library throughout the school year. Facilitated by a licensed mental health counselor, the goals of this program are community connection, building positive relationships, and developing new skills such as self-awareness, social wellness and coping with stress. Teen participants will also be able to discuss feelings, interests, ideas and goals in a safe and supportive environment. The open house for this program is scheduled for September 17 at 6:30 pm.

"Chat About That" – Formally known as our "Tea & Conversation" group, this program is free and open to anyone who wants to improve their English conversation skills. The group will meet every Monday from 12:00 to 1:00 pm beginning September

16 at the Clarence Public Library. Attendees are welcome and encouraged to bring conversation topics and do not need to register. And, of course, tea will still be served!

Makery Programs – Our afterschool “Makery” programs for school age children have been a huge success for the past year. Students have had an opportunity to work on a variety of maker-focused projects. Past examples include ZEN Gardens, beach-inspired wind chimes, pressed flower lanterns, sun catchers, and no-knit yarn art. September’s afterschool Makery is *Hojalata* or Mexican tin art. This program will take place September 18 at 4:00 pm. Students will craft their own tin art inspired by Day of the Dead sugar skulls. Also, this month, on September 16 at 6:30 pm, we will present a new “Evening Makery” for those 14 and up. The theme for this Makery is *Kintsugi* (“Golden Joinery”), which is a Japanese art that repairs broken pottery with gold, rendering a new piece that is more exquisite than it was before the break. It literally means to join with gold. Participants will bring a broken mug and make Kintsugi and will receive an African violet to put in their new creation.

And There Was Light - A presentation based on Pulitzer Prize winning author Jon Meacham’s book *And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Struggle*. Respected presenter Bob Poczik will use Lincoln’s own words and vintage photographs to bring a complex, imperfect and yet heroic Lincoln to Life. This program is scheduled for Monday, September 30 at 7:00 pm. Patrons are asked to call the Clarence Public Library at 716-741-2650 to register.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy informed the Executive Committee that the Foundation has been working through strategic planning.

Agenda Item H – The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Martha Buyer shared that the next ACT meeting is Saturday, October 19 at the Aurora Town Public Library. The topics to be discussed are budgeting and discretionary funds. Discussion ensued regarding ACT business.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee Panty shared that she went to the Kenmore Public Library’s Board meeting. She stated that they are doing well and they discussed the situation involving *The Sound of Freedom* DVD. Discussion ensued regarding the Kenmore Public Library and whether or not the B&ECPL Board of Trustees has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy. Assistant Deputy Director Judy Fachko stated that we have the New York State Anti-Harassment Policy. She then went into issues the policy covers. Discussion ensued regarding the Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy, mandatory staff training, and other aspects of the policy. Director Spears stated that he will reach out to the Kenmore Public Library Director Mary Muscarella.

Trustee Kelly visited the Marilla Free Library. She stated that they approved the RFP for their new roof. Discussion ensued about the Marilla Free Library roof and the Central

Library roof. Trustee Kelly also stated that she is impressed with the amount of programs and events held at the Marilla Free Library. Discussion ensued.

Agenda Item I - Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item J - Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K - New Business.

Agenda Item K.1. - Creation of Ad Hoc Committees. Chair Johnson proposed the creation of the Visioning Process Ad Hoc Committee. Nathaniel Barnes asked if the goal is cultivating a mission and vision for the Library. Director Spears and Chair Johnson stated that is correct. Chair Johnson also proposed the creation of the Content Based Appellate Ad Hoc Committee. Trustee Bedenko asked if there is a policy in place for requests of reconsideration of materials. Director Spears explained there is and they are handled as they are submitted. Chair Johnson nominated herself, Trustee El-Beahiry, and Trustee John Craik to be on the Visioning Process Ad Hoc Committee.

Chair Johnson asked for approval of the creation of the Content Based Appellate Ad Hoc Committee. Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee El-Beahiry seconded, and this creation was approved unanimously. Chair Johnson then asked for approval of the creation of the Visioning Process Ad Hoc Committee. Trustee El-Beahiry motioned for approval and Trustee Panty seconded and this was approved unanimously.

Discussion ensued on whether to create an ad hoc committee surrounding the hiring of a new Deputy Director. It was decided that when the time comes the Board will re-evaluate the creation of this committee.

Agenda Item L - Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Panty with a second by Trustee El-Beahiry, the meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carima El-Beahiry,
Vice Chair