



**HIGHLAND COUNTY**  
DISTRICT LIBRARY

# **Annual Report 2021**

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**Emily Foster, Rocky Fork Branch Manager**

# Letter from the Director

2021 - what a year! As the Library continued to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we strived to serve Highland County residents by providing superior library services including: public meeting spaces; new books, movies, and music; mobile hot spots; programs for children, youth, and adults; and access to community information. Much of our focus this year was on bringing back and building up the programs, activities, and collections that library patrons have come to love. We are grateful to the community for supporting us in this goal and for standing with us in our efforts to be a center of connection and information.

The library was aided in this endeavor by the addition of several new staff members. Kegan Hurley joined the Greenfield Library; Brandy Lawson joined the Leesburg Library; Jacob Webb joined the Rocky Fork Library; and Kia Armstrong joined the Hillsboro Library. We're excited to have them join our team!

In the spring, the library partnered with the Highland County Health Department and Community Action to distribute take-home rapid COVID tests as a service to the community. Our joined efforts enabled thousands of tests to get into the hands of residents so they could safely go to work and school.

We were very eager for this year's Summer Reading program, "Tales and Tails," and it did not disappoint! We were able to hold activities such as carnivals, puppet shows, and stuffed animal shows. We also hosted some animal friends like wolves, snakes, birds, turtles, and spiders! We were again able to team up with the Humane Society for an adoption event. Multiple crafts, drawings, and games were also available to participants during Summer Reading.

Popular events such as Comic Con and Local Author Night were also held this year, with great success. Banned Books Week was celebrated, along with National Library Week. While we were unable to hold a Black History Month event this year, we did collaborate with the African American Awareness Research Council for a Juneteenth event honoring Reverend Wendell Harewood. The library also had multiple crafts and activities aimed at all ages for Halloween and Christmas celebrations, such as the Lumanaria. Additionally, the library was able to again offer regularly occurring programs such as sign language classes, toddler story times, book clubs, knitting groups, Lego clubs, and writing clubs.

The annual circulation for 2021 was **286,289**. This number includes the circulation of e-format item (e-books and digital or downloadable audio and video items) which was **46,510**. These numbers are a slightly higher than last year's circulation. While this isn't a huge increase, it reflects the work that library staff put into creating and promoting great collections for our community and shows that we are headed in the right direction. There is room for improvement, and we will do our best to help this trend grow even more in 2022.

Looking back, 2021 was a unique year as the library navigated providing new services such as distributing Covid testing kits and offering curbside services as needed, all while continuing to hold library clubs, story times, and special events. We also strove to create the best collections possible for the community. The library staff worked hard and I'm very proud of the service the library was able to offer the citizens of Highland County. We are looking forward to continuing this tradition and to having a productive and positive 2022!

Suzanne Roberts, Director

# Statistics

County Population (2020 estimate): **43,317**

Circulation: **286,289**

Per capita circulation is **6.61** items

## Library Snapshot in a Typical Week

Library attendance	1,647
Reference transactions	103
Non-reference* transactions	434

\*directional, policy, mechanical

## Registered Borrowers

	2021	2020
Adults	16,592	18,941
Juveniles	2,221	1,954
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,813</b>	<b>20,895</b>

## Circulation 2021

	Hillsboro	2020	Greenfield	2020	Lynchburg	2020	Leesburg	2020	Rocky Fork	2020	Totals	2020
Books	72,407	67,443	19,898	18,318	14,883	17,061	15,797	14,967	6,228	3,596	129,213	121,385
Periodicals	2,600	2,914	637	897	943	870	333	407	147	68	4,660	5,156
DVD/ VHS	27,060	32,161	7,956	8,946	6,155	5,707	3,344	3,440	3,100	3,243	47,615	53,497
Music and CD-ROMS	1,549	992	262	446	592	483	322	177	234	50	2,959	2,148
Audio- books	2,144	3,255	364	381	492	528	556	315	53	137	3,609	4,479
Hot spots	134	4	43	5	145	10	134	11	147	9	603	39
Microfilm	60	116									60	116
Misc											8,629	
Loaned to other libraries	19,140	20,809	5,123	6,296	7,247	7,259	4,783	5,817	6,138	4,040	42,431	44,221
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>125,094</b>	<b>127,694</b>	<b>34,283</b>	35,289	<b>30,457</b>	31,918	<b>25,269</b>	25,134	<b>16,047</b>	11,143	<b>239,779</b>	231,178
E-formats (Overdrive)	22,244	22,568	7,244	5,817	3,697	3,612	8,397	8,122	362	145	41,944	40,264
E-formats (hoopla)											4,566	6,363
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147,338</b>	150,262	<b>41,527</b>	41,106	<b>34,154</b>	35,530	<b>33,666</b>	33,256	<b>16,409</b>	11,288	<b>286,289</b>	277,805

## E-Formats

**Hoopla: Total Circulation**

	2021	2020
January	395	603
February	406	519
March	428	683
April	413	841
May	389	701
June	378	544
July	367	401
August	363	412
September	357	416
October	341	512
November	395	425
December	334	406
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,566</b>	<b>6,363</b>

**Hoopla: Number of Users**

	Total Users 2021	2020	New Users 2021	2020
January	963	769	7	13
February	966	782	3	13
March	973	814	7	32
April	977	841	4	27
May	987	852	10	11
June	994	862	7	10
July	1,000	869	6	7
August	1,006	876	6	7
September	1,013	890	7	14
October	1,021	894	8	4
November	1,027	903	6	9
December	1,031	908	4	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>152</b>

\*Hoopla changed their 2019 calculations in 2020

**Hoopla: Items Borrowed**

	2021	2020
Audiobooks	1,544	2,014
Comics	217	271
e-Books	1,496	1,910
Movies	677	874
Music	277	568
TV episodes	351	726
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,562</b>	<b>6,363</b>

**Ohio Digital Library: Use by Location**

	2021	2020
Hillsboro	22,244	22,568
Greenfield	7,244	5,817
Lynchburg	3,697	3,612
Leesburg	8,397	8,122
Rocky Fork	362	145
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,944</b>	<b>40,264</b>

The **Ohio Digital Library** is a program of the State Library of Ohio and is supported in whole or in part by federal Institute of Museum and Library Services funds, awarded to the State Library of Ohio. The Highland County District Library is a member of the Ohio Digital Library.

The **Hoopla** movies can be downloaded onto a device and watched without an Internet connection. The movies available through the **Ohio Digital Library** can only be streamed and require an Internet connection.

## Computer Use 2021

	HHI	2020	HGR	2020	HLY	2020	HLE	2020	HRF	2020	Totals	2020
Wireless Use	4,196	4,874	4,019	4,3043	1,806	828	3,408	1,743	2,334	1,338	15,763	13,087
PC Reservation Use	3,825	4,587	1,715	2,184	608	754	561	694	389	502	7,098	8,721

## In-House Use 2021

	HHI	2020	HGR	2020	HLY	2020	HLE	2020	HRF	2020	Totals	2020
In-house Use*	3,009	1,678	1,219	1,897	1,014	4,630	4	1,385	4	7	5,250	9,597

*\*“In-house use” includes use of newspapers, periodicals, microfilm reels, and honor paperbacks within the library. Guidelines for In-House Use were redefined in 2020.*

## Outreach

**Hillsboro:** The Hillsboro Library participated in the HCS Food Truck Kick-Off and the Community Baby Show, and monthly reading to seniors at Bell Gardens. In addition, visits were made to Bright Local and Hillsboro City Schools.

**Greenfield:** The Greenfield Library visited the Greenfield Exempted Schools as part of their Summer Reading sign-up.

**Leesburg:** The Leesburg Library participated in story times at Fairfield Elementary and visited Fairfield Local Schools for Summer Reading sign-up. They also joined the community in the annual Beggar’s Night and worked with the Lion’s Club to participate in the Luminaria event.

**Lynchburg:** The Lynchburg Library provided a new offering for patrons – “Story Time to Go”. Patrons could pick up a themed story time kit (with book and craft) and take it home with them.

**Rocky Fork Lake:** The Rocky Fork Lake Library participated in the annual Fourth of July Parade and the Lake Trunk or Treat.

# Programming

<b>Hillsboro</b>			<b>Greenfield</b>		
<b>Program Type</b>	<b># of Programs</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b># of Programs</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Adult	92	1394	Adult	34	896
Teen	1	28	Teen	8	46
Children	67	987	Children	43	788

<b>Leesburg</b>			<b>Lynchburg</b>		
<b>Program Type</b>	<b># of Programs</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b># of Programs</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Adult	32	475	Adult	1	126
Teen	23	174	Teen	9	87
Children	143	4295	Children	14	949

<b>Rocky Fork Lake</b>		
<b>Program Type</b>	<b># of Programs</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Adult	18	213
Teen	2	9
Children	74	497

<b>System Totals</b>		
<b>Program Type</b>	<b># of Programs</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Adult	177	3,104
Teen	43	344
Children	341	7,516

## HILLSBORO ADULT AND TEEN DEPARTMENTS

Written by Sarah Davidson, Hillsboro Library Circulation Manager

Continued COVID-19 restrictions early in the year meant that programming had a virtual focus; however, as guidelines shifted to something closer to normal, so, too, did our programming schedule. Many of our clubs started to meet in person, rather than only on Zoom. As such, our “Ask an Expert” program series was dissolved during the summer. While these were informative programs that allowed a platform for the community to talk with local experts, they unfortunately did not spark much interest and participation was low.

Summer Reading in 2021 returned to normal, with several engaging programs for patrons of all ages. Highlights included live birds of prey, snakes and reptiles, and a fox, as well a make-your-own birdhouse craft that saw a massive turnout with 73 patrons. The Library Comic Con was a fun-filled day, with 44 patrons of all ages--many decked out in superhero and anime-themed costumes--coming to enjoy activities ranging from scavenger hunts, to bingos, to crafts. Our Local Author Night also saw our largest crowd in the three years we’ve hosted it: Twenty-six patrons came to meet and listen to six authors describe their books and writing journeys. Summer Reading ended with a special carnival, with 65 total patrons attending and a total of 496 tickets turned in from winning our various games. A drawing determined winners of our grand prizes--Kings Island tickets, a Cincinnati Zoo pack (with tickets), and a family fun kit.

August was a month of both returning and new activities. Paint Nights restarted, and Trivia Tuesdays, Craft-er-noons, and an Adult Anime Club were added to our programming roster. Paint Nights were met with the same enthusiasm as previous years, with patrons excited to learn how to paint while also enjoying a sense of camaraderie. (Paint Nights are hosted by librarian Donna O’Dom.) Trivia Tuesdays began with low numbers, but as 2022 approaches, we are starting to see a few “regulars” coming to these bi-weekly activities. Craft-er-noons have also started to gain significant interest in the community. Librarian Avery Applegate has hosted some very engaging crafts that patrons really enjoyed, including book binding and making Christmas trees from book pages.

A particularly special highlight of the year was the library’s Banned Books Festival. We were very fortunate to receive a grant from the Freedom to Read Foundation to host this unique event. Over the course of five days, patrons could enjoy a variety of activities, including writing to banned authors, exploring the library in a banned books scavenger hunt, taking pictures with banned books, and competing in banned books trivia. Then, at the end of the week, patrons were invited to a special Banned Books Discussion and Dinner. For each activity that patrons attended, they were given slips for a drawing. Each slip was a chance a chance to win one of five grand prize gift baskets, each valued at over \$100. By the end of the week, we had 44 drawing slips returned and five very happy patrons who won prizes that were themed around the banned books: *The Call of the Wild*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Harry Potter*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Lord of the Flies*. The festival marked the most participation the library has ever seen with a banned books-themed event. Throughout the week, patrons would also comment and discuss our decorations and displays. The end result was a week-long experience of interaction and engagement.

As we reached the end of 2021, we celebrated October with Halloween-themed programming: “UFOs are Real” and “The Wolf: Fact vs. Myth,” with 10 and 53 patrons participating, respectively. Clubs continued to be a strong part of our programming schedule, with both BYO-Book, Comic Book Club, and Write-Away Club all seeing, not only faithful members, but also periodically new members. The adult anime club was also met with excitement.

Looking ahead to 2022, we are planning to incorporate more teen programming. Hopefully, we will be able to bring back the Tween and Teen Make-and-Create Club. In addition, we will start a Teen Anime Club in January. The library is also looking at incorporating Tik Tok into its advertising, as a way to reach younger patrons. In addition, we hope to add more passive programming back into our usual roster.

The last year was one that came with unique challenges as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to evolve. But librarians met each challenge with a positive outlook and a focus on the community--and by bringing both education and fun to our patrons. From the Banned Books Festival to Local Author Night, we saw massive increases in programs and topics that, in the past, have had less involvement. Patron-favorite activities, such as clubs and Paint Nights, continued to be met with zeal and steady participation numbers. New programs added to the schedule (Trivia Tuesdays and Craft-er-noons) are on their way to becoming staples of the library experience, with patron interest slowly growing with each new activity.

As always, the library is beyond thankful for the community we serve. Our goal is to be a place where people of all ages can learn and grow, but also where they can form connections. We plan to take what we have learned this past year into the next and continue to make the library the safe, fun, and educational place upon which our patrons can depend.

As we continued to monitor the many necessary restrictions that came with the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 was, overall, a significant relief in comparison to 2020. As guidelines changed, we were able to offer most of our normal programming. As always, the safety of both patrons and staff was always a top concern. If at any time staff or patrons were uncomfortable, plans were adjusted. One advantage of these adjustments was the inclusion of Zoom as an option during club meetings. Members of the library's Comic Book Club utilized this option and participation in that club stayed steady throughout the pandemic and even saw an increase towards the end of the year.

The library also played a significant role in the community with COVID-10 assistance. We partnered with the health department as a take-home COVID test pick-up location. A massive amount of patrons regularly visited our library to pick up tests. In addition, the availability of hot spots was a huge advantage to students who needed to stay home due to quarantining or other COVID-related issues.

**ADULT AND TEEN DEPARTMENTS:** Sarah Davidson, Dana Hylton, Sandra Jenkins, Donna O'Dom, Hannah Thirey, Betty Yates, Jessica Burrier, Kelli Cole, Zana Smith, and Avery Applegate

## **HILLSBORO CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT**

Written by Gabrielle Pitzer, Hillsboro Children's Library Manager

At the end of our 2021 End of the Year Report, we said that we were looking "forward to finding our "normal" routine again." There were certainly parts of the year where things felt more normal to us and patrons. We were able to reopen our doors for patrons to come back in and browse. By the fall of 2021, most in person programming was happening again for adults and children. Safety precautions were taken as needed: continuing of cleaning of items when returned, social distancing during programs, wearing facial coverings, and cancelling programs due to illness. In addition to our "normal" library responsibilities, we became a lifeline for those looking for the rapid take-home covid-19 tests. Gov. Mike DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health looked to libraries to hand out the much needed tests. We rose to the occasion and handed out tests via curbside or lobby pick-up. The Children's Library tried to tally that amount of phone calls we took regarding the tests and to our estimate, we took no less than 1,000 calls. The 2021 children's staff consisted of Gabrielle Pitzer (manager), Madeline Crabtree, Laura Bradley, and Christina Rittenberry.

We did not start holding regular story time again until for beginning of Summer Reading. Our first story time was held on Wednesday, June 8, 2021. From that point on until the end of the year, story time was held every Wednesday morning at 11 am for 0-2 year olds and 11:30 am for 3-5 year olds. During this six-month period, story time was held 54 times for 347 children and 192 adults. Evening story time was held once a month from September through December for a handful of children and their parents. At the end of December, due to when the holidays fell, story time was not held the last two weeks. As an alternative, we took all of the leftover crafts and packaged them up as take-home crafts. Many parents and children took advantage of this to do the crafts that they had missed.

As the 2020-2021 school year came to a close, while still unable to do regular visits for story time, we did manage to attend a few events. In the beginning of May, we were invited to visit Bright Local Elementary in Mowrystown, to speak to every class pre-school to sixth grade. While there, students were told all about the upcoming summer reading program and teachers were given handouts with information for students. Then at the very end of the school year we were invited to attend the Hillsboro City Schools Tomahawk Food Truck Summer Food Program kick-off event. At this event we set up a table and presented information about library activities and the summer reading program. Many parents and students stopped by to chat and 40 kids were signed-up for the summer reading program. And in June we had a table at the Highland County Community Baby Shower at Liberty Park. While there, parents were able to sign their children for



different reading programs, have a book dedicated to their child, or enter to win a “My First Library” prize pack (21 entered).

To the enjoyment of the children, we were able to start our Lego Club up again beginning in September. Lego Club proved to be more popular than ever, averaging 5 children and 3 adults per meeting. Gabrielle took over the club when Emily Foster became the Rocky Fork Lake Manager last year. Gabrielle is looking forward to growing the club and trying out some exciting new Lego challenges with the children.

The most exciting part of 2021 had to be the fact that we were able to have an almost “normal” summer reading experience. The theme for the summer was Tails and Tales, a mixture of animals and stories. The entire summer reading program lasted 8 weeks and 260 children ages 2-14 participated. As with last year, the children were entered into a level drawing for every 10 books that they read, with the chance to earn five drawing tickets. We also offered a bonus reading log and a BINGO challenge to participants. Of the 260 children signed-up, 118 (45%) completed level one, 84 (32%) completed level two, 72 (28%) completed level three, 56 (21.5%) completed level four, and 49 (19%) completed level five. For the bonus reading log, 12 (5%) participated while 84 (32%) got a BINGO. Because we were able to have in-person programming, we had ten events throughout the summer. 276 children and 195 adults enjoyed the programming with our Make Your Own Birdhouse being the most popular event for both age groups.

Throughout the year, the children’s library encouraged and informed parents about the Ohio Governor’s Imagination Library. While the program has not released enrollment totals per county, statewide more than 300,00 children age 5 and under receive books in the mail. Another ongoing reading program that the library started was 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten. Every child under kindergarten age is invited to sign-up and keep track of the books they read before starting kindergarten. As the name states, the goal is 1,000 books in essentially 5 years. At the end of 2021, 7 children are enrolled.

We were very lucky that we were able to do most of our events and contests in person rather than over Facebook. We also used this opportunity of having taken a break to change up our normal activities. We stopped doing the Guess How Many and Birthday contests in favor of more monthly passive activities. More than 100 patrons took take-home craft kits, over 200 children made a name tag for the wall, every scavenger hunt had around 30 participants (around 120 total), coloring contests (around 60 entries returned), and our Winter BINGO had 63 participants.

The entire children’s library is looking forward to 2022. We know there will be moments of “normal” and moments where we will be treading water, trying to stay afloat. But as long as we continue to work together, there isn’t anything that we cannot accomplish.

**CHILDREN’S DEPARTMENT:** Gabrielle Pitzer, Madeline Crabtree, Laura Bradley, and Christina Rittenberry.

## **GREENFIELD BRANCH LIBRARY**

Written by Spencer McNeil, Greenfield Branch Manager

The Greenfield Branch Library had a strange and exciting year navigating its way back to normality. The year began with the library operating with curbside service only and ended with most of our regular in-library programming.

During the first two months, the library staff was busy printing, faxing, copying, and running books to patrons’ cars. Though not ideal, some of the new procedures became quite popular. For example, many patrons continue to email documents they need printed to our library email instead of logging on, remembering/forgetting their email password, etc. Several patrons continue to use the curbside service to pick up books too. During this time, there was an increase in the number of take home crafts.

The Perennial Exchange drew a large crowd and many community members have asked us to continue this program each year. The Knitting and Crocheting group began meeting on Tuesday evenings in October. The group has around 10 regular members. The American Sign Language Class began meeting in October also.

The Summer Reading Program was largely successful, the number of signups was comparable to previous years, but program attendance was through the roof! Tie-Dye and Drip Art drew large messy crowds of all ages. Raptors Inc. brought birds of prey, Dr. Insecta brought scorpions, tarantulas, and delicious worms for attendees to eat, but it was the reptiles from the Cincinnati Herpetological Society that drew in over 170 people to the library. In lieu of asking for donations from the community, the library purchased prizes for Summer Reading this year.

Story Time, the Holiday Reading Program, and our other monthly contests continued to have increased attendance throughout the year. The library staff is planning on restarting our Teen Book Club and beginning a Dungeons and Dragons Club this Spring.

**GREENFIELD BRANCH STAFF:** Spencer McNeil, Deb Wise, Ashley Roberts, Cynthia Allen, Kyle Barr, and Kegan Hurley

## LEESBURG BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Melinda McGee, Leesburg Branch Manager

The Leesburg Library took steps towards recovery in 2021 by continuing with home delivery of books, encouraging the use of hot spots (all 6 are always checked out or waiting to be picked up), and having longer conversations with our patrons (people are hungry for conversation). Although we provided curbside service only during January and February, we were still able to provide nearly 200 programs/events/activities for our patrons throughout 2021. While we had staff turnover, we never had to close because of COVID issues and only closed one day due to other issues.

Participation in our children's programming had been expanding prior to our shutdown in 2020. We were able to restart Story Time in September and averaged seven preschoolers, plus their caretaker per program (Wednesday & Thursday at 10:30 am). Restarting the Page Turners (tween reading group) has been trying. In February 2020, Page Turners topped out at 10 participants. Now, we continue with an average of two. Knit Together, the adult knitting club, has disbanded.

Our Summer Reading program, however, was a huge improvement over 2020. 166 youth (12 and younger) signed up (61% active participation), 14 teens signed up (86% active participation), and 20 adults signed up (90% active participation). We were able to have live programming and the response was great to *Magic Safari*, *Once Upon a Time with Mr. Means*, and *Magical Tales and Tails*. A big hit during Summer Reading, "Tails and Tales" was our Stuffed Animal Pet Show. One enterprising participant went on social media urging people to come in and vote. Yes, he won in a landslide!

A successful and new program presented in 2021 was "Donuts with Dad", which we held the Saturday before Father's Day. Dads and their kids were able to enjoy a hot drink and fresh donut from Batter Up. The kids had the opportunity to make a gift for their Dad.

We have always enjoyed working with local organizations to provide services to our community. In 2021, we were able to work with and/or support the Leesburg Fire Department and Life Squad, Leesburg Food Bank, Community Action, the Leesburg Lions Club, and the Leesburg Historical Society.

Our relationship with the Fairfield Elementary School continues to strengthen and grow, despite restrictions. While there was no Lions on Literacy event in March 2021, we were able to give a live outreach in May promoting our Summer Reading program. We were also able to participate in Fairfield's Safe Trick or Treat Give-A-Way in October, while

continuing our own Beggar's Night tradition. Finally, we have started a monthly Story Time for Fairfield's newly established pre-school.

The Leesburg Branch Library in 2021 was not just a "rental service", it was a place for everyone in the community to connect, if not gather. It remains a source of help in these difficult times. We strive to assist our patrons to be an integral part of the Leesburg community.

**LEESBURG BRANCH STAFF:** Melinda J. McGee, Brenda Putnam, Angela Chaney, Jaime Copley, Geri McCloskey, and Brandy Lawson Wiget

## **LYNCHBURG BRANCH LIBRARY**

Written by Elaine Williams, Lynchburg Branch Manager

In 2021, our branch continued "Storytimes to Go," offering drop-in and take-out crafts for kids on 30 different topics. We gave out over 750 crafts throughout the year. This was an overwhelmingly positive response, in contrast to our previous in-person storytimes that required families to gather in person at the same place and time, with low attendance. Next year, we hope to try both formats to reach as many children as possible.

This year, the Highland County District Libraries were asked to partner with the Highland County Health Department in distributing at-home rapid COVID-19 test kits to the public. The Lynchburg Branch alone gave out 1,478 test kits between August and December of 2021. This program ranged from a distribution of three test kits the first week to our record of 181 during the week after the Highland County Fair. This kept our staff very busy! We also continued to circulate our popular T-Mobile hot spots, an essential service to an area of Highland County that is broadband-poor.

2021's Summer Reading Club was one of our favorites: an animal-themed Tails & Tales. It was good to have the kids come inside again for some amazing programs that were funded by Dr. Barbara Mihalik. We were able to host the Cincinnati Museum Center twice for Exploration Station drop-in events and for four other interactive events involving farm animals, animals that hatch from eggs, tall tales, and wild animals. Mark Wood and Jim Kleefeld performed their magic shows to good turnouts as well. We had 174 children, 10 teens, and 31 adults sign up for the reading program this year, a great increase from 2020's numbers.

For teens, we continued the Improv group over the summer. When school started again in August, they all made the school play. We will go back to Improv when students are available later in the school year. Volunteens helped around the library in 2021, and showed us how to work with new social media platforms, too!

Our Polar Express Reading Challenge had an upswing this year, from 14 participants in 2020 to 51 in 2021. SWON Libraries consortium director Gayle Ecabert, a former Lynchburg Library patron, invited Branch Manager Elaine Williams to facilitate their new Rural & Small Libraries online discussion group. The group meets via Zoom once per quarter to talk about issues and solutions that specifically affect the libraries in outlying areas of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. There were three meetings in 2021 that were attended by staff from academic as well as public libraries.

In 2022, we hope to grow back into fuller adult programming, and to try some new outreach strategies as well. We appreciate our community, our board, and our administration. Thank you for making 2021 a great year for us!

**LYNCHBURG BRANCH STAFF:** Elaine Williams, Jean Bush, Debi Dillon, Carol Frost, and Megan Priore.

## ROCKY FORK BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Emily Foster, Rocky Fork Lake Library Manager

The Rocky Fork Branch Library started the year off by continuing curbside only service from the year before. The entire library system dropped to curbside service on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and did not reopen for full service until March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. We continued to make take home craft kits for the kids, which were a big hit. During curbside, we also performed a large-scale weeding on our collection. When we reopened on March 1<sup>st</sup>, we launched a huge book sale that went until April 6<sup>th</sup>. Along with the book sale, March saw the launch of story time, an Easter egg coloring contest, and a Blarney stone hunt.

April and May were busy months preparing for the library's annual summer reading program. Summer 2021 was the first summer the Rocky Fork Branch would be participating, as the pandemic did not allow for it the year before. We wanted to make sure we had everything ready to go and devoted many, many hours of prepping goodie bags, picking out prizes, and booking talent to make this is best summer for the kids.

June 1<sup>st</sup> – the official first day of summer reading! Kids could fill out logs to earn five smaller prizes, a large prize, and an entry to win a pair of Kings Island tickets or a bicycle! Teens and adults could fill out a drawing slip per book read to try to win another set of Kings Island tickets or a Fitbit. Our animal themed summer reading program was a hit. We held 9 main events for all ages, with a total attendance of 200. Our Human Society Adoption Event ended up with one kitten going to her forever home! We could not have asked for a better first reading program.

In August, we expanded our shelving and created a dedicated children's section. We ended up rearranging the entire library after shifting the children's books to their new home. We created a dedicated audio-visual wall and expanded our fiction sections. Good thing we made more room – in September we received a lot of pristine donations we spent several days cataloging.

During October, the Rocky Fork ladies participated in the trunk-or-treat held by our neighboring stores, Dollar General and Bobabarica Subs. We passed out over 6 bags of candy. We also had a special program, The Wolf: Fact vs. Myth presented by Ironwood Wolves. They brought two ambassador wolves, Azula and Alma. We learned so much about wolves and even got to pet Alma!

After we wrapped up our Halloween fun, we realized we had accumulated so many donations that we opened up our second book sale of the year on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Our book sale ended up running until the end of December. November also marked the 2-year anniversary of the Rocky Fork Branch's grand opening. To finish out the year we held our Holiday Reading Program for all ages from November 22<sup>nd</sup> to Dec 18<sup>th</sup>.

As we start of 2022, I want to thank our faithful patrons who have been with us through this unusual time. The two years the Rocky Fork Branch Library has been open have been intense times of uncertainty and change. Who knew just a few months after we opened we'd be in a global pandemic – I certainly didn't see that one coming! While we've bounced between being shut down, curbside services only, or open normally, our patrons have supported us wholly. Thank you for your support and for helping us flourish in such tumultuous times. We look forward to a successful 2022!

**ROCKY FORK BRANCH STAFF:** Emily Foster, Jennifer Lowe, Sandy "Sam" Planck, and Jacob Webb

## PROGRAMMING DETAILS

**HILLSBORO:** Black History Month program honoring Reverend Wendell Harewood, HCS Food Truck Kick-Off, Dear Banned Author, Banned Book Scavenger Hunt, Banned Books: Picture This!, Banned Books Trivia, Banned Books Dinner and Discussion, UFOs are Real, Wolves: Fact vs. Myth, Bi-weekly Craft-er-noon, Bi-weekly Trivia Nights, Ask an Expert, Adult Write-Away Club, Comic Book Club, “Bring Your Own Book” Club, Bi-weekly Paint Night, Book Sale, Anime Club, Tween and Teen Make and Create Club, Lego Club, Story Time, Community Baby Shower, Jungle Animal Mini-Golf, Lion Hunt, Easter Contest, Pumpkin Contest, Winter Bingo, Library Week: Match the Librarian to Their Favorite Book, Summer Reading Weekly Trivia, Summer Reading Scavenger Hunt, Summer Reading Bingo, Summer Reading Writing Contest, Make Your Own Birdhouse, Beaks and Talons, Magical Safari, Reptiles with G.C.H.S., Comic Con, Foxes in Folklore, Jungle Animal Bingo, Make a Pet Toy

**GREENFIELD:** Book sale, Perennial Exchange, Summer Reading Sign-Up, Puzzlers, Library Card Month Drawing, American Sign Language class, Knitting and Crocheting, Tie-Dye, Bracelet Craft, Animal Adaptations, Perler Beads, Teen Puzzle Drawing, Perler Bead Christmas Ornaments, Jelly Bean Contest, Kid Crafts, Coloring Pages and Puzzles, Egg Decorating Contest, National Library Week Book Marks, Author Spotlight, Pumpkin Coloring Contest, Candy Corn contest, Gingerbread Man Contest

**LEESBURG:** Adult Reading Group, Monthly Trivia, Donuts with Dad, Weekly Summer Reading Trivia, How Much Contest, Adena Health Challenge, Book Sale, DAR Constitution Week Challenge, Banned Book Week Challenge, Giving Thanks Tree, Remembering our Veterans, “Believe” Program, Beggar’s Night, Story Time

**LYNCHBURG:** Incredible Insects Exploration, Stuffed Pet Show, Mark Wood Magician, Tall Tails, From the Backyard to the Barnyard, Magical Tales and Tails, Amazing Animal Adaptations Exploratorium, Egg-cellent Eggs, Dog Breed Matching game, Pumpkin Scavenger Hunt, Turkey Hunt, Polar Express, Summer Reading Club, Wild About Animals, Adult Summer Reading Club, Teen Volunteers, Teen Improv, Teen Summer Reading Club

**GREENFIELD:** American Artwork contest, Pumpkin Coloring contest, Holiday Reading contest, Lego club, Story Time, Take Home Craft kits, Book Sale

**ROCKY FORK LAKE:** Easter Egg Coloring Contest, Holiday Reading Program, Summer Reading Weekly Drawings, Pumpkin Coloring Contest, Story Time, Animal Bingo, Blarney Stone Hunt, Chalk Art & Popsicles Day, Awesome Animal Adaptations, Humane Society Adoption Event, Foxes in Folklore, Wolf: Fact vs. Myth, Magical Tales with Tails, Mark Wood Fun Show, Raptors Inc., Summer Reading Craft Day, Book Sale

## DISPLAY DETAILS

**Hillsboro:** Black History Month Display – Wendell Harewood, September 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Paint Night, Photos by Penny Fisher, Summer Reading Prizes, Highland Historical Society, Victorian Memorial, Christmas Village, Christmas Cooking

**Greenfield:** Art from McClain High School, Summer Reading Prizes, Earth Day, Highland County History, Halloween, Antique Cookbooks, Bears and Santas

**Leesburg:** Women's History Month, April is FOOD Month, National Reading Month, Summer Reading, History of Highland County, Women in the Service, Christmas Around the World

**Lynchburg:** Easter Eggs, Animals, Harry Potter, Asian Items

**Rocky Fork Lake:** Constitution Week, Pioneer Day, Civil Rights, Eric Carle, Gary Paulsen, Winter Holiday, Lois Ehlert, Memorial Day, Shark Week

## DONATIONS AND GIFTS

Jackie Pierson, FNP-BC, Bobabarica Subs, donation in memory of Keiara Scott, Hillsboro High School, Mr. Pulman, Ms. Jen Howland, Thomas Hughes, John and Betty Dodds, Merchants National Bank, The Dobson Family, Ann Siddons, Dwight and Sharlene Hendrick, Fern Fisher, Jeri Johnson, Phyllis Prewitt, Loretta Dean, John and Suzanne Hapner, Gayla Thompson, Dr. Barbara Mihalik D.O., Nancy L Perin, T.M. & Carolyn Hamilton, Mr. & Mrs. William K. VanPelt, Mr. & Mrs. W. Christopher VanPelt, Michael and Beverly Young, Karen and Richard Hastings, Tara and Edward Bloom, Lynchburg Masonic Lodge, Barbara Cook, Edmund Stromberg, Janice Paul, Wendy Shaw, Jennifer West, Bart McBane, Barbara Held, Darlene Michael, Jim Adkins, the Steritz/Howard families