



HIGHLAND COUNTY
DISTRICT LIBRARY

Annual Report

2024

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Letter from the Director

2024 has been another year of growth and learning for the Highland County District Library! We had lots of engaging events, contests, and programs designed to provide information, enrichment, and education to Highland County residents. Library activities ranged from the formation of a travel club, to a community scavenger hunt, to story times at local schools and Head Start classes, to visits from our favorite animal friends, marionettes, and even Santa! We are grateful to the many community partners and patrons who helped make these events possible. In other big news for 2024, the Leesburg Library received some needed repairs to the outside trim of the building and the Hillsboro Library received a new outdoor sign to help establish the library as an essential part of the Highland County community.

We were pleased to welcome several new staff additions this year, in our on-going efforts to provide high-quality public service. The following individuals joined the library in 2024: Barbara Funk and Robin Snyder – Rocky Fork Library; Kimber Cooper - Leesburg Library; Leslie Adams – Greenfield Library; and Aleah Sheppard and Kathrine Wilson - Hillsboro Library. We're excited to have them join our library crew! Finally, Greenfield Library legend Deb Wise retired after 30-plus years and Hillsboro Library legend Donna O'Dom retired after 20-plus years. Both were exemplary library workers and will be missed. We wish them the very best!

Patrons and librarians alike had lots of fun with the 2024 Summer Reading program, "Adventure Begins at Your Library". We held great activities such as princess visits, catapult and rocket building, science events, Old West adventures, an Alice in Wonderland party, a bear hunt, medieval and magical celebrations, and more. We also welcomed some scary birds of prey and cool critters. We teamed up again with the Humane Society for a successful pet adoption event. Multiple crafts, drawings, contests, and games were also available to child, teen, and adult library patrons throughout Summer Reading and everyone who participated had a great time!

Other popular regular events such as Paint Nights, Merry Money, Trunk-or-Treats, Comic-Con, and Luminaria (along with regular book, knitting, and chess clubs) continue to be a big hit. The Library once again joined with the African American Awareness Research Council and the Highland County Historical Society for a Black History program honoring the Coleman Family and Josh McCoy. We had craft and reading club activities for all ages throughout the year, and held special Halloween events and Christmas celebrations. In 2025, we want to add even more popular craft activities, clubs, and classes recommended by patrons.

The total annual circulation for 2024 was **299,953**. This number includes the circulation of e-format items (e-books and digital or downloadable audio and video items) which was **52,246** (an almost 7% increase from 2023!). The total annual circulation was approximately 1.2% lower than last year's circulation. On a positive note, the number of programs offered went up 8.4%! This data is an incentive for us to find new ways to improve the library's collection for Highland County residents. With that in mind, we opened a public survey asking what programs and materials the community would like to see. The results from this survey will guide what we offer library patrons in 2025, and will hopefully lead to further engagement and use by the Highland County community in the upcoming year. The library team has also taken a multi-pronged approach to increasing library usage in 2024, including circulation-based contests; attending more community events; increasing visits and communication to schools, pre-schools, and Head Start; posting on community Facebook pages; public surveys; emailed newsletters; teen-focused clubs; and more story-times. And in 2025, we plan to continue this by also offering video game nights, classes on library apps, partnering with community groups such as the Senior Center and YMCA, more reading clubs, classic movie nights, book bundles, weeding the library collections, and providing pop-up libraries at community events.

2024 proved to be a good building year for the Highland County District Library. Our goal is to improve further and make the library an even better resource for the community in 2025!

Suzanne Roberts, Director

Statistics

County Population (2023 Census Bureau estimate): **43,614**

Circulation: **299,953**

Per capita circulation is **6.88** items

Library Snapshot in a Typical Week

Library attendance	2,226
Reference transactions	139
Non-reference* transactions	396

**directional, policy, mechanical*

Registered Borrowers

	2024	2023
Adults	15,685	16,505
Juveniles	2,290	2,251
TOTAL	17,975	18,756

Circulation 2024

	Hillsboro	2023	Greenfield	2023	Lynchburg	2023	Leesburg	2023	Rocky Fork	2023	Totals	2023
Books	76,704	74,415	21,286	23,352	17,086	18,862	16,565	18,018	7,266	8,707	138,907	143,354
Periodicals	1,965	1,658	449	523	735	817	934	354	89	20	4,172	3,372
DVD/ VHS	28,041	29,266	7,657	7,069	4,186	4,740	3,504	3,557	4,049	2,979	47,437	47,611
Music and CD-ROMS	919	1,346	239	400	603	768	107	101	38	232	1,906	2,847
Audio- books	1,250	1,509	253	283	662	889	496	479	92	120	2,753	3,280
Hot spots	255	408	159	233	342	473	264	468	385	599	1,405	2,181
Microfilm	446	137	8	2	1	10	5	8	8	0	468	157
Misc.*	237	1,787	11	209	25	292	341	361	5	285	619	2,934
Loaned to other libraries	22,049	22,108	7,439	7,179	8,424	8,317	7,590	6,535	4,538	4,809	50,040	48,948
TOTALS	131,866	132,634	37,501	39,250	32,064	35,168	29,806	29,881	16,470	17,751	247,707	254,684
E-formats (Overdrive)	25,300	25,424	6,316	5,587	4,408	4,155	8,097	8,738	977	621	45,098	44,525
E-formats (hoopla)		---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	7,148	4,316
TOTAL	157,166	158,058	43,817	44,837	36,472	39,323	37,903	38,619	17,447	18,372	299,953	303,525

E-Formats

Hoopla: Total Circulation

	2024	2023
January	405	312
February	460	372
March	508	313
April	493	334
May	614	391
June	602	355
July	593	345
August	631	402
September	697	382
October	717	388
November	705	350
December	723	371
TOTAL	7,148	4,315

Hoopla: Number of Users

Total Users	2024	2023	New Users	2024	2023
January	1,156	1,029	January	12	8
February	1,168	1,048	February	12	19
March	1,186	1,057	March	15	9
April	1,201	1,061	April	16	4
May	1,231	1,073	May	30	12
June	1,250	1,082	June	19	9
July	1,264	1,089	July	13	7
August	1,282	1,107	August	19	18
September	1,302	1,113	September	20	6
October	1,324	1,125	October	19	12
November	1,348	1,135	November	24	10
December	1,365	1,145	December	20	10
FINAL	1,365	1,145	TOTAL	219	124

Hoopla: Items Borrowed

	2024	2023
Audiobooks	4,197	1,829
Comics	254	161
e-Books	1,423	1,348
Movies	678	488
Music	262	250
TV episodes	241	200
Binge Pass	93	40
TOTAL	7,148	4,316

Ohio Digital Library: Use by Location

	2024	2023
Hillsboro	25,300	25,424
Greenfield	6,316	5,587
Lynchburg	4,408	4,155
Leesburg	8,097	8,738
Rocky Fork	977	621
TOTAL	45,098	44,525

The **Ohio Digital Library** is a program from the State Library of Ohio and is supported in whole or in part by the 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**, need to be streamed, and require an Internet connection.

Computer Use 2024

	HHI	2023	HGR	2023	HLY	2023	HLE	2023	HRF	2023	Totals	2023
Wireless Use	3,383	3,861	4,018	3,555	1,731	2,362	2,517	2,148	3,526	3,358	15,175	15,284
PC Reservation Use	3,969	4,570	1,588	1,886	525	780	667	687	497	635	7,246	8,558

In-House Use 2024

	HHI	2023	HGR	2023	HLY	2023	HLE	2023	HRF	2023	Totals	2023
In-house Use*	2,491	428	1,504	1,333	876	995	75	51	5	58	4,951	2,865

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

Programming 2024

Hillsboro			Greenfield		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance	Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	69	418	Adult	6	67
Teen	12	60	Teen	2	15
Children	208	6,535	Children	64	829
General	139	2,847	General	58	986
TOTAL	428	9,860	TOTAL	130	1,897

Leesburg			Lynchburg		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance	Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	46	514	Adult	31	463
Teen	29	286	Teen	5	16
Children	158	2364	Children	54	343
General	83	1064	General	82	1,315
TOTAL	316	4,228	TOTAL	172	2,137

Rocky Fork Lake		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	1	79
Teen	0	0
Children	61	540
General	9	242
TOTAL	71	861

System Totals		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	153	1,541
Teen	48	377
Children	549	10,756
General	371	6,454
TOTAL	1,121	19,128

Outreach 2024

	Hillsboro	Greenfield	Lynchburg	Leesburg	Rocky Fork	Total
Events	16	2	36	83	20	157
Attendance	1615	350	1947	1,833	1,161	6,906

HILLSBORO ADULT AND TEEN DEPARTMENTS

Written by Sarah Davidson, Hillsboro Library Circulation Manager

2024 was a busy year for programming at the Hillsboro Library. We offered several new clubs and activities, increased our outreach, and expanded our Summer Reading roster--and the community responded with enthusiasm!

In total, 1,204 kids, 189 teens, and 2,809 adults came to our programs throughout the year, for a total of: 4,202. In comparison, our total participation was 1,630. This is a 157.7% increase from last year.

New programs added to this year's schedule included: Two baking contests; Cookbook Club; Series Club; Youth Writing Club; and month-long celebrations, including Poetry Month and Roald Dahl month. Our baking contests (one focused on cookies and the other on holiday treats), were held in May and November respectively. We partnered with local bakers to act as judges and saw contestants and taste-testers of all ages come to compete and sample. In total, these contests saw 107 participants.

The Hillsboro Library also started four new ongoing clubs this year. The Series Club is focused on ages 9-15 (with parents/guardians encouraged to participate alongside them) as we all read our way through a selected series. By the end of 2024, 120 participants had read, snacked, and crafted their way through the first two *Harry Potter* books. Pokémon Club, headed by librarian Kim Norman, saw a total of 112 people come "catch 'em all" with special activities and snacks that celebrate these famous "pocket monsters." The club is designed for ages 8-14, but, again, parents/guardians are more than welcome to join in the fun.

Kim also organizes the Youth Writing Club, which has two very dedicated young patrons working on writing their own books. Kim also keeps busy with the Cookbook Club, during which adult patrons are invited to pick a recipe from an assigned cookbook, make it, and then share it during a monthly potluck. Youth Writing and Cookbook Club have both had a harder time gaining popularity; however, they still saw a total of 54 participants.

In addition to adding new activities to our programming schedule, we also focused on interacting with the community outside of the library. We attended meetings of the Women's Club, the Rotary Club, and the Garden Club. We also had

booths set up during a special farmer's market and at a community resource fair. We are grateful to the community for thinking of us with these events and we hope to continue to make similar connections next year. In total, we reached 209 people throughout the community.

Summer Reading is always the library's busiest month, and that was certainly true this year. We expanded our program, offering 15 activities in comparison to 8 in 2023. With the help of a grant, we were able to offer a variety of crafts, speakers, and interactive experiences. Highlights include the annual Comic Con and Local Author Night, as well as a presentation by Ohio Nature entitled "Animals We Love to Hate;" crafts, such as tie-dye and rock-painting; and an Amazing Race experience where patrons could "travel" the world and compete in challenges. Altogether, Summer Reading saw 1,304 patrons having fun at the library. In comparison to last year (349 participants), 2024's summer programming saw a 273% increase in participation.

Additionally, the library also continued with its established programming. This includes periodic drawings and contests (such as the Hobby Month and Valentine's Day drawings), passive programs (such as Poetry Month's weekly activities and the Seed Exchange), annual patron-favorites (such as the Altered Book Art Contest and the return of the library's murder mystery parties), special celebrations (such as Pokémon Week and Roald Dahl Month, both of which were in conjunction with the children's department); and regular monthly and bi-monthly clubs (including Craft-er-noons and Travel Club).

Our Craft-er-noons in particular continue to grow and see patrons of all ages come together to make unique creations. The Craft-er-noons are headed by librarians Avery Applegate, Vivian Barrowclough, and Sarah Davidson. This year, 308 patrons attended Craft-er-noons. (Participation for 2023 was 247.) Also continuing to grow in popularity is the Travel Club, which was first introduced in 2023. Children's manager Gabrielle Pitzer assists in this club, which this year saw 179 patrons, ages infant through retired.

Other regular clubs include: Trivia Tuesdays, Write-Away Club, BYO-Book Club, and Comic Book Club. These clubs, headed by Sarah, saw less participation in 2024, but the patrons who come are dedicated and enthusiastic. In total, 185 patrons attended these clubs throughout the year.

Continuing in its earnest popularity is the library's bi-monthly Paint Nights. Run by librarian Donna O'Dom until her retirement at the end of July, these classes are always in high-demand with a long waiting list. Following Donna's retirement, assistant manager Betty Yates inherited organizing the classes and patron Dottie Bayless took over teaching the lessons. The Paint Nights have continued to produce beautiful masterpieces and happy patrons, with 220 participating throughout the year.

Also this year, the library offered ASL (American Sign Language) classes. These were offered throughout the year with two different instructors, with variable participation. Some classes would see several students; others would only see one or two. We are evaluating to see if this is a program that we should continue in 2025. Throughout the year, 88 patrons attended classes.

We also began a patron-led Dungeons and Dragons campaign, which meets every other Saturday. Excitement and participation was overwhelming; at one time, 18 patrons were in attendance during one meeting. In all, from September through December, 82 patrons (ages tween through adult), participated in these epic fantasy adventures.

We are very grateful to everyone who donated throughout the year that allowed us to be able to offer such a wide variety and quantity of programs. These include: Long's Retreat, COSI, Young's Dairy, Rockin' Jump, Gibbs Insurance Association, Clark Family Dentistry, Dairy Queen, Hillsboro Family Dentistry, Merchant's National Bank, Dancing on Tabletops Studios, Hendrix Pottery, Just My Type Jewelry, Burwinkle Family Dentistry, Bickle Insurance, Roller Haven, Jennifer West, the Cincinnati Zoo, Kings Island, Dr. Lesia Langston-McKenna, and Little Caesar's. Additionally, we would like to thank those who donated their time for programs: Brittney Howard (ASL classes), Grandma's Ghost Chasers (Paranormal Research Presentation), John Willis (Hiking Presentation), and the Bigfoot Research Organization (Bigfoot Presentation).

As we look ahead to 2025, we are incredibly grateful to our community which has shown outstanding support throughout the year. Our goal is to provide a fun place for learning, creativity, and enrichment, and we are so happy that our patrons seem to be enjoying the programs we have offered. We are going to evaluate surveys that we have taken throughout the

year to hopefully continue to offer activities that engage the community, and to also grow our rosters to include new interests. As such, we will try to reach as many people as possible who may not already be using the library. We will look at different advertising avenues as well as other outreach opportunities. As the calendar flips to January, we are hopeful and excited for 2025. Thank you, again, to our wonderful community, and to the staff here at the library whose skills, creativity, and teamwork, make these programs possible. Thank you!

ADULT AND TEEN DEPARTMENTS: Sarah Davidson, Dana Hylton, Donna O'Dom, Betty Yates, Kelli Cole, Avery Applegate, Rhonda Manuel, Tyler Jones, Vivian Barrowclough, Kim Norman, and Aleah Sheppard

HILLSBORO CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

Written by Gabrielle Pitzer, Hillsboro Children's Library Manager

If the Hillsboro Children's Library had to pick a word to describe 2024, it would be "non-stop." We hit the ground running in January and didn't seem to take a break the rest of the year. We tried to pack in as many events and ideas into the calendar year as we could. In fact, we ran out of time to do a lot of our ideas and are planning on fitting them into the 2025 calendar if possible. The 2024 children's library staff consisted of Gabrielle Pitzer (manager), Madeline Crabtree, Jill Wyatt, and Jamie Knedler.

Storytime once again proved to be one of, if not the most, popular program held at the library. The storytime groups had gotten so crowded in the last year, that we decided to add two additional sessions on Mondays. The Monday and Wednesday sessions all read the same book and did the same craft to give parents more opportunities to attend based on their personal schedules each week. Monday sessions were at 10:30 and 11:00 am and Wednesday sessions were at 11:00 and 11:30 am. Over the course of the year, storytime was held 129 times with 1,461 children and 1,006 adults attending. Hopefully storytime will continue to be as popular as ever in the coming year.

Our outreach efforts with local schools also grew this year. As with the 2023 school year, Jill made monthly visits to read to the children that attend the YMCA's Patri-Tot program at Southern State Community College. Jill was also asked to come read to the children at Sunrise Sunset Day Care each month. The two groups were visited 8 times with 166 children and 129 adults attending. The Hillsboro Christian Academy asked to continue to visit the library twice a month to check out books for the 2024 school year. For this school year there were two classes instead of just one. The end of the last school year and beginning of the next saw 269 children and 39 adult visits. Before summer reading, Gabrielle visited and talked about the program to the entire elementary school at Bright Local and the 20 kindergarten and first grade classes at Hillsboro Elementary.

We were also able to conduct outreach with several other school and community events. The preschoolers from Hills and Dales came to the library for a field trip in the early spring. Information tables were set up at the Highland County Community Fair, the Highland County Community Baby Shower, and the Hillsboro Elementary Open House. We attended and spoke at meetings for the local Rotary Club and the Hillsboro Women's Club. And several times throughout the year, patrons made cards that were shared with local nursing homes, community helpers (police, sheriff's, and fire departments), and the local Veterans Office.

We are proud to say that the attendance for Lego Club nearly doubled from last year. The club meet a total of 22 times with 179 children and 162 adults attending. For each meeting, Jamie had a theme or challenge for the children at build upon. As always, the children love showing off their creations in our display case after each meeting.

"Adventure Begins at Your Library" really rang true for our summer reading program. It really was our busiest summer reading in recent years. After listening to feedback from patrons, we once again changed our reading goals to be the same for children of all ages (50 books), but changed our prize system (the children earned "Brag Tags" when goals were met). 352 children ages 0-14 signed up for the program and 106 of them completed the goal of 50 books. In addition to our normal Thursday evening programs, we added what we called Crafty Tuesdays Mornings, which proved to be extremely

popular. In total, there were 15 summer reading programs held in June and July with just over 1,300 children, teens, and adults taking part.

The numbers for the Imagination Library of Ohio saw growth both state and county wide. Statewide enrollment went from 59% to 62%. And 62% of eligible children in Highland County are enrolled. The library's 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program saw a couple more children finish and several more sign-up. The children and their parents have been reading a lot over the past year and we believe that 2025 will have our largest number of finishers.

In 2024 the state library system asked us to track the number of scavenger hunts done and take home crafts given to patrons. The children love scavenger hunts, so we tried to have them monthly this year. We made up 14 different hunts throughout the year and they were done just over 1,000 times! Last year we had started our Take Home Craft program and really expanded on the idea. In addition to coming up with one or two crafts per month, we started offering any extra crafts we had left over from storytime. Patrons had their choice of 36 different crafts over the year and 1,049 were given away. Other than summer reading programs, our most popular program had to be our Alice in Wonderland Tea Party. Over 100 patrons attended and Papa John's was generous enough to donate pizza for the event. Our most popular give away event was for the Solar Eclipse glasses. Not a pair was to be had the day of the eclipse.

We really hope that we can repeat the success of this year in 2025. We have lots of ideas and are really looking forward to the "Color Your World" summer reading program.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT: Gabrielle Pitzer, Madeline Crabtree, Jill Wyatt, Jamie Knedler

GREENFIELD BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Spencer McNeil, Greenfield Branch Manager

The Greenfield Branch Library had another exciting year providing our community with services and programs. There were several staff changes throughout the year. Deb Wise retired in April after over 30 years of service to our community at the library. She left us with big shoes to fill and lots of crafty work to figure out. In June, Leslie Adams joined our amazing team.

Story Time met on Fridays from January to August, but after our September Break, we decided to try having them on Wednesday morning. This program is offered to pre-kindergarten children. One or more story is read followed by a craft, songs, dancing, etc. The Knitting and Crocheting Group continued to meet on Tuesdays at 6 PM with eight regular attendees and many who come less regularly. Craft Time with Mia was another popular program at the library this year. This program offers a craft on Tuesday evenings for school age children, from 1st Grade to Middle School. In the fall, Mia decided that the group would meet every other week and do more impressive crafts. We also added an Adult Craft Time that meets every other week.

The Summer Reading Program brought many children, teens, and adults to the library throughout June and July. "Adventure Begins at your Library" took us brought animals, messes, and fun to the library. The Greater Herpetological Society of Cincinnati returned with their ever-popular "Reptiles" which brought in over 180 patrons- of course, if it was the day our air conditioning went out. We had Dr. Tony impress us with his balancing and magic tricks. We were lucky to have Middle School students from the McClain FFA bring in some of their farm animals. The library also welcomed a Scottish Princess and These guest programs along with our Tie-Dye, Slime, Play Dough, and Perler Bead programs brought hundreds of people to the library during Summer Reading.

We had several other events at the library. The Halloween Party and Gingerbread Candy Christmas Event were very successful and fun. We look forward to what the new year brings us.

GREENFIELD BRANCH STAFF: Spencer McNeil, Deb Wise, Kegan Hurley, Mia Keeton, Bailey Smith, Lisa Williams, and Leslie Adams

LEESBURG BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Melinda McGee, Leesburg Branch Manager

The Leesburg Branch Library in 2024 continued to be the place for everyone in the community to gather and connect. We remained a source of help in a time where community services are being reduced and eliminated. We were recognized by Leesburg's Mayor, Rita Smith-Daulton, for our efforts to assist patrons with their informational, educational and recreational needs. We are proud to be an integral part of the Leesburg community. We are still providing curbside service upon request and our Hot Spots are continuously checked out or waiting to be pick up.

We provided nearly 300 programs/events/activities for our patrons throughout 2024. Participation in our children's programming continues strong. In addition to our twice weekly in library Story Time, we provide a monthly Story Time to the Fairfield preschool classes and Kindergarten through Second Grade at Fairfield Elementary. Monday evening Lego Club and Saturday morning Lego Club are still drawing in both youth and families. Crafts and trivia remain popular!

Our relationship with Fairfield Elementary School continues to strengthen and grow. In addition to Story Time, we participated in Lion on Learning in March, had a week long outreach in May promoting our summer reading program and gave candy to the Fairfield's Safe Trick or Treat Give-A-Way in October while continuing our own Beggar's Night tradition.

Our summer reading program, *Adventure Begins at Your Library*, was a hit. 214 Youth (11 & younger), 61 Teens (12-18) and 53 Adults (19 & older) signed up. Youth participation was up over 30%, while teen and adult participation more than doubled over 2023. We had visits from Cool Critter Outreach, Professor Tony, Stephanie Ortlieb & Lola, Stevens Puppets, Crystal Clear Science and Gnu Adventure. Our Pokémon Event was one of the patron favorites.

Our fall gratitude challenge saw our patrons express thanks for everything from chickens to family to faith to the library and books and more. RRR, our adult reading group, is sadly and reluctantly considering disbanding. However, another group has been started by a new group of readers. This year's Leesburg Luminaria was well attended at the library for the crowning of the King and Queen.

We have always enjoyed working with local organizations to provide services to our community. In 2024 we were able to work with and/or supported the Leesburg Fire Dept. and Life Squad, Leesburg Food Bank, Community Action, the Leesburg Lions Club, the Leesburg Historical Society, Fairfield Elementary School and Fairfield Preschool.

LEESBURG BRANCH STAFF: Melinda J. McGee, Angela Chaney, Elizabeth Brown, Rachel Grider, Chelsey Wyatt, and Kimber Cooper

LYNCHBURG BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Elaine Williams, Lynchburg Branch Manager

We are proud to say that the Lynchburg Branch continues to play a vital role in the village and in the communities surrounding Lynchburg. Local agencies such as Highland County Community Action and the Clinton County Board of Developmental Disabilities used our meeting room for appointments with clients. Buckeye Online Testing met with 25 clients at the library in 2024 as well. Online contests and polls are extremely popular in our community. Brian Vance of

the Lynchburg Masonic Lodge challenged us to run a poll: Are people from Lynchburg called *Lynchburgers* or *Lynchburgians*? There were 197 votes across three community pages, with most preferring the name *Lynchburgians*. For our Jelly Bean contest, we had 30 in-person entries and 453 online entries!

We enjoyed a strong relationship with Lynchburg-Clay Elementary School again this year. The weekly Kindergarten story times resulted in 1,659 interactions with kids and teachers over the school year. We made 57 new library cards for kindergarteners in September for Library Card Signup Month. Two classes had 100% participation in signups and got library pizza parties for their students. We are very fortunate that our four kindergarten teachers promote the public library and encourage kids and their parents to use it. In March, combination Youth Librarian (since 1997) & Branch Manager (since 1999) Elaine Williams was nominated by the Lynchburg-Clay kindergarten teachers as a Community Service Award Recipient by the Southern Ohio Educational Service Center. She and her guest Danica Bailey attended the recognition ceremony for Elaine to accept this award at the Four-County School Boards meeting, held at the Laurel Oaks Campus on May 9.

In addition to our usual, traditional programming, we made an extra effort in 2024 to hop on the bandwagon of popular culture to reach more of a built-in audience, with good results. The newest Indiana Jones movie inspired our 2024 Jungle Adventure summer reading event. For Harry Potter fans, we offered *An Evening at Hogwarts* in January and the Harry Potter Birthday Party in July. For sports fans, there was a Super Bowl Touchdown Challenge and a drawing for tickets to a Cincinnati Cyclones hockey game. Squishmallow Bingo had the activity room at capacity twice during the year, and we have already had a request to do it again in 2025. The total solar eclipse in April captured everyone's imagination; for this event, we distributed hundreds of eclipse glasses, made special displays, and hosted the Cincinnati Observatory's Eclipse presentation for all ages. After a short hiatus and leadership change, our Dungeons & Dragons group is underway again using a free starter adventure kit distributed to libraries by the makers of the game.

As always, the Summer Reading Club is the highlight of our year. The theme was *Adventure Begins at Your Library*, and we tried to live up to that slogan with programming that included science, sharks and other creatures, character performances, and art. We tried a unique program this year called "Traveling You" that involved local children and their parents creating a mini-me paper version of themselves, which the library then mailed to 14 participants across the country. In paper form, these traveled all over the USA: everywhere from the beaches of North Carolina to the mountains of Vancouver, Washington, from Chicago to Waxahachie, Texas. The recipients of the "flat kids" all photographed them on various adventures and emailed the pictures back to the library. Each child received color photos of their alter egos at touristy locations and a map highlighting where they had been. Everyone seemed to enjoy the Traveling You project! Our Merry Money program in the fall involved 97 readers, shoppers, volunteers, and family members.

Lynchburg's Top Adult Library User of the Year was Mr. James Braley, who lives a block away from us and walked down to check out a whopping 572 items in 2024 – this does not include renewals! When informed of his top position, Mr. Braley was very pleased and said, "The library is what I do!" In 2025, we are looking forward to serving him and all of the other individuals and families who have made the public library what they do, and we are grateful for the ongoing and essential support of the library board and administration. Thank you so much!

LYNCHBURG BRANCH STAFF: Elaine Williams, Carol Frost, Megan Priore, Madison Barrett, and Mason Barrett

ROCKY FORK BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Katie Thomas, Rocky Fork Lake Library Manager

The Rocky Fork Branch began 2024 finishing out our winter reading challenge. We had 18 kids, 2 teens, and 3 adults signed up. In January going into February we had a display on the front desk where patrons shared the reasons why they love their library with answers that ranged from loving story time, to being thankful for the kind, helpful staff. In March we had the joy of handing out glasses to prepare for the eclipse. Patrons who checked out 3 adult items, or 5 kids' items received a pair of glasses. We gave a total of 140 glasses. In April we were overrun with 5th and 6th grade students from

the Hillsboro Christian academy. We learned about the origin of Earth Day and went over the basics of how the library works.

In May we worked hard preparing for our Summer Reading Program. June and July saw the fruition of our efforts. We had 36 kids and 15 adults sign up for summer reading. Every week we had a new adventure for story time, complete with different decorations and a new scavenger hunt to match the adventure of the week. We also had several guest speakers come to visit including Illusionist Jake Lindsey, Crystal Clear Science, Ohio Nature Education, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources officer. We also did our best to get the Rocky Fork business community involved with our community scavenger hunt. We had a total of 8 people participate and they all commented on how much fun they had.

In September we celebrated Smokey Bear's 80th birthday by participating in the Smokey Bear Reading challenge. We had 13 kids sign up to learn more about how to prevent forest fires.

In October we got to participate in two trunk or treats, one at the Dollar General next door and one at the Hillsboro Church of the Nazarene. We decorated our trunk with a Charlotte's Webb theme and got to pass out treats with information about our story times and Lego club to 158 kids at Dollar General and 541 kids at the Nazarene church.

In November we were happy to celebrate our 5-year anniversary. We did this by giving away five, \$50 gift cards. To be put into the drawing, patrons had to check out 5 items. We had 79 entries. We also held our first adult craft night where we made floral center pieces in preparation of Thanksgiving. In December we ended the year with another adult craft where we made Christmas wreaths. It was such a hit that patrons were asking when the next craft will be, so in 2025 we will be adding a monthly adult craft time. We also had a fun visit from Santa Clause and had a total of 33 people come to see him. We read a Christmas story and handed out small stuffed animal key chains.

We also had a few staff changed this year. Sam Planck left us after almost three years and was replaced by Barbara Funk. In September Elisabeth Greer left to get married. She was replaced by Robin Snyder. We miss Sam and Elisabeth, but are happy to have Barbara and Robin.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are looking forward to finding ways to grow our recurring programs like story time and Lego club while adding new programs like our adult craft time. We are also looking forward to the fun art theme for summer reading this year.

Rocky Fork Branch Staff: Katie Thomas, April McGuire, Tyler Jones, Sandra "Sam" Planck, Elisabeth Greer, Barbara Funk, Robin Snyder

PROGRAMMING DETAILS

HILLSBORO: Black History Month program, Trivia Tuesdays, Craft-er-noons, Travel Club, Crochet Club, Dungeons and Dragons club, Winnie the Pooh Craft Day and Drawing, Blizzard Movie Bucket Giveaway, Knitted Hag Giveaway, National Puzzle Day Craft and Giveaway, Valentine's Day Card Station, Heart Coloring Contest, Lunar New Year Giveaway, Mo Willems Activity and Giveaway, Beach Party, Children's Book Trivia, Leap Day Celebration, Pokemon Week, Winter Book Bundles, Dr. Seuss Week, Thank You Card Station for Community Helpers, Spring Week Giveaway, Hills and Dales Preschool visits, March Crafty Saturdays, Easter Egg Coloring Contest, Sun and Moon Craft Day, Solar Eclipse Giveaway, April Fool's Day Joke Bag Giveaway, Alice in Wonderland Tea Party, Guess How Many Pages activity, Star Wars Week Craft and Drawing, COSI Water Box Drawing, Check-out Mania, Hillsboro NJHS Help Day, Mother's Day Card Station, Name the Bear Contest, Summer Reading Pizza Party, Summer Reading Crafts (Shrinky Dinks and Buttons, Beads, Tie-Dye, Rock Painting, and Nature Art), Scavenger Hunts (Library Weekend, Valentine's Day, Pokemon, Leap Day Frogs, Spring, Alice in Wonderland, Dinosaurs, Bears, Camping, Olympics, Candy, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas), Animals We Love to Hate, Comic Con, Wilderness Games and ODNR, Campfire and BigFoot, Local Author Night, Birdhouses and Audubon, Amazing Race, National Parks Crafts, Bear Hunt, Summer Reading Ice Cream Party, Wonka Month Celebration and Drawing, Pumpkin Coloring

Contest, President of the Children's Library, Thank You Card Station for Veterans, Community Christmas Cards, Story Times, Lego Club, Checkout Club, Birthday Club, Kid Librarian, Sign Language class, Poetry Month crafts and open-mic, Cookie Contest, Wonka Chocolate Bar, Road Dahl Day, Match the Librarian and Monster, Haunted Gingerbread House, Holiday Treats Baking Contest, Christmas Escape Room, Altered Book Contest, Read Across America, National Library Week, May the Fourth Be With You, Hobby Month, Valentine's Drawing, Pokemon Week, Seed Exchange, Series Club, Pokemon Club, Youth Writing Club, Write-Away Club, BYO Book Club, Comic Book Club, Paint Nights, Cookbook Club, Garden Club Presentation, Grandma's Ghost Chasers

GREENFIELD: Valentine's Party, Basket Weaving, Easter Egg Coloring Contest, Rainsboro Elementary School library visit, Greenfield Head Start Library visit, FFA Paws and Pages, Professor Tony visit, Reptiles from the Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society, Perler Beads, SunCatchers, Scottish Princess Visit, Tie-Dye, Pottery Making, Play-Dough Making, Slime Activity, Halloween Party, Gingerbread Candy Christmas event, Library story times, Kid's Craft Time, Adult Craft Time, Knitting Club, Dungeons and Dragons Club, Take Home Crafts & Scavenger Hunts (snowman, snow scene, groundhog, be mine, snail, hearts, turtles, rainbows, llamas, cat, otter, flower, bear puppet, fish windsock, bookmark, door hanger, book worm, turtle magnet, tiger, standing lion, koalas, ice cream maker, ice cream stand, RWB glitter pages, baby parrots, lemonade, snake ribbons, pencil case, pencil turtle, lantern, owl, bear and fox, Halloween wreath, Halloween puppet, turkeys, pies, and ornaments)

LEESBURG: Take & Make Crafts (snow people, valentine hearts, eggs & bunnies, umbrellas, Mother's Day, Father's Day, kites, school bus, county fair, ghosts, pumpkins, Christmas trees), Scavenger Hunts (winter wear, hearts, bunnies, umbrellas, butterflies, book hunt, back to school, Halloween characters, turkeys, candy canes), Trivia (monthly), Book Journal Give Away, Contests (Population Snowville, MLK Jr. Book Reading, US Presidents Book Reading, Book Lovers' Favorites, Heart Decorating, Egg Decorating, Umbrella Decorating, Book Cover Design, Win it for Mom, Flower Decorating, How Many Poker Chips, I Know My Library, Adult Coloring, Teen Coloring, Treasure Map, Modeling Clay Food, Animal Mask, Fantasy Creations, Old West, Coaster Creation, Mystery, Gingerbread House, First Night, National Cookie Day, Candy Cane, Read-It), Hidden Disgrace Author Program, Donuts with Dad Event, Cool Critter Outreach Program, Professor Tony program, Stephanie Ortlieb and Lola Program, Goldilocks & the Three Bears Program, Stuffed Animal Pet Show, Seed Planting, Water Adventure, Mystery Adventure, Crystal Clear Science Program, Pokemon Event, Gnu Adventures, Summer Reading Families Event, Animals Shadow Box Design, Covered Wagon Building, Environmental Globes Creation, Harvest Party, Holiday Hoopla Party, Sports Event, Let's Restore the Depot, Book Hunt, Digging for Treasure, Food Adventures, Animal Adventures, Fantasy Adventures, Beggars Night, RRR Adult Reading Group, Story Time (at Leesburg Library and Fairfield Pre-School and Elementary), Monthly Trivia (adults, teens, and kids), Weekly Trivia (adults, teens, kids), Birthday Drawings, Lego Club, Adult Reading Group, Exercise/Dance class

LYNCHBURG: Page Turners Book Club, Merry Money, Story Times, Chain Gang, Chess Club, D&D Club, Crafts to Go (Snowman, Heart Snail, Dragon, Mardi Gras, Fish Bowl, St. Patrick Mouse, Easter Basket, Solar Eclipse, Rainbow Clouds, Dragon Fly, Bluey, Bingo, Mother's Day, Sea Turtles, Dreamcatchers, Juggling, Snails, Tents, Grill, Hedwig, Autumn Gnome, Hedgie and the Leaves, Cat Pumpkin, Turkey, Snowman 2, Reindeer, Inside Out 2), Scavenger Hunts (Snowman, Two of a Kind, Pumpkin Patch), An Evening at Hogwarts, Hockey Tickets Drawing, Superbowl Touchdown Challenge, Author Visit – David Fierst, Underground Railroad Museum in a Box, Eclipse Program Cincinnati Observatory, Lynchburg High School Class Tour, GNV Adventures, Harry Potter Birthday, Author Visit – Penny McGinnis, Raptor Inc/Trick-or-Treat, Christmas Tea, Jelly Bean Contest, Popsicles and Sidewalk Chalk, Mysteries and Marvels, Jungle Adventure, Science Adventure, Newport Aquarium Shark Cart, Traveling You, Wizard of Oz Marionette Show, The Scottish Princess, Watercolor Painting, Acrylic Painting, Squishmallow Bingo, No-Sew Pillows, Volunteens

ROCKY FORK LAKE: Scavenger Hunts (snowflakes, valentines, St. Patrick's Day, spring rain, spring flowers, outerspace, carnival, cowboy, pirate, ocean), Take-Home Crafts (snowman puppet, fuzzy penguin, paper plate butterfly, wonderland, camping, hiking, jungle, back 2 school, pokemon, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, candy can), Winter Reading Contest, Hillsboro Christian Academy visit, Trunk-or-Treat (Dollar General and Nazarene Church), Jake Lindsey Illusionist Show, ODNR Trail Safety, Community Scavenger Hunt, Stuffed Animal Sleepover, Archeology Day, Crystal Clear Science, Ohio Nature Education, Smokey the Bear Challenge, Pumpkin Color Contest, Anniversary Giveaway, Christmas Tree Coloring Contest, Solar Eclipse Glasses Giveaway, Story Times, Lego Club, Craft Night

OUTREACH DETAILS

Hillsboro: Hillsboro Library made visits to the Highland County Community Fair, Rotary Club Lunch, Highland County Baby Shower, Bright Local Elementary School, Hillsboro Elementary School, Hillsboro Women's Club, Hillsboro Elementary Open House, YMCA Storytimes, Community Baby Shower, Hillsboro Elementary Open House, Hillsboro PTO School Carnival, Hillsboro Christian Academy, and Day Care Story Times.

Greenfield: The Greenfield Library joined the Downtown Greenfield Trick or Treat event, the Greenfield Oktoberfest community event, visited Greenfield Elementary Preschool, and visited Greenfield Head Start.

Leesburg: The Leesburg Library participated in story times at Fairfield Preschool and Elementary School, visited Fairfield Elementary for Summer Reading sign-up, and visited the Fairfield 7th grade classes. They also joined the community in the annual Beggar's Night, Lion on Learning, Leesburg Health Fair Contest, and the annual Luminaria.

Lynchburg: The Lynchburg Library provided Summer Reading promotional visits to Lynchburg Elementary pre-k through grade 5, story times at Lynchburg Elementary kindergarten classes, Library Card Sign-Up pizza parties to Lynchburg Elementary kindergarten classes, 1st grade Literacy tutoring, and Accelerated Reading tutoring classes, and 3rd -5th grade literacy assistance to Lynchburg Elementary.

Rocky Fork Lake: The Rocky Fork Lake Library participated the Lake Trunk or Treat and the Nazarene Church Trunk-or-Treat, Hillsboro Christian Academy Pre-School story times, and Hillsboro Head Start story times.

DISPLAY DETAILS

Hillsboro: The Coleman Family and Josh McCoy - African American Month, Lego Club creations, Donna O'Dom artwork, Cabin Fever, Perry Fisher Photography, Quilts of Highland County Quilt Show, Mona Lisas, Paleoworld Dinosaur Exhibit, Hillsboro Librarian Artistic Creations, Robert Hinds Jewelry

Greenfield: Christmas Village, Knitting Cam/Sandra McNeil, Boy Scouts Memorabilia, Summer Reading Prizes, Iceland Photography, Costa Rica Photography

Leesburg: Snowflakes, Black History Month, Cabin Fever Days, Books and the Movies Based on Them, Summer Reading Prizes, Back to School, Money Making, R.L. Stine, Ohio Authors, Christmas, Lego Club creations

Lynchburg: FCCLA from Lynchburg-Clay, Civil War-era Medical Tools, Adventure Souvenirs From Around the World, Art of Natalie Paul, Eclipse

Rocky Fork Lake: Lego Club displays and Dinosaur Fossils from Dennis Kimberly

DONATIONS AND GIFTS

Long's Retreat, COSI, Young's Dairy, Rockin' Jump, Gibbs Insurance Associates, Clark Family Dentistry, Dairy Queen of Hillsboro, Hillsboro Family Dentistry, The Reading Room, Kay McMullen Estate, Warren Home Furnishings, Papa John's of Hillsboro, Merchant's National Bank, Dancing on Tabletops Studios, Hendrix Pottery, Just My Type Jewelry, Burwinkle Family Dentistry, Bickle Insurance, Roller Haven, Jennifer West, Cincinnati Zoo, Kings Island, Dr. Lesia Langston, Little Cesar's of Hillsboro, Brittany Howard, Grandma's Ghost Chasers, John Willis, Bigfoot Research Organization, Bickle Insurance, Jan Slagle, Sharon Aukerman, Tom and Debby Beatty, McDonald's of Greenfield, Adena Medical Center, Brenda Armstrong, Allie Ballard, Batter Up Bakery, Fred Beetz, Elizabeth Brown, Marilyn Butler, Candle Lite, Marsha Carlin, Laura Carphey, Mary M. Chapman, Community Market, Sadie Dehass, Daniel Donnelly, Joe Donnelly, Judith Donnelly, Rachel Grider, Maria Grimm, Highland Lanes, Hillsboro Historical Society, Jana Hobson, Sue Ellen Honeycutt, Renee Hughes, Jani-Chem, Barb Jenkins, Joe's Party Shop, Candess Kearns, Kyle Kirt, Lessburg Historical Society, Maggie Maddock, Geri McCloskey, Melinda McGee, Jacob Morrison, Amy Palmer, Roof-X, Saucy Sisters, Tom Schockette, Sharon Shields, Teddy Shields, Kathy Spurlock, Square 1 Heating and Cooling, Elizabeth Strittenbreger, Turner Funeral Home, Walmart of Hillsboro, Wendy's of Hillsboro, Ruth Wheaton, Chelsey Wyatt, Dr. Barbara Mihalik, Lynchburg Lions Club, Lynchburg Masonic Lodge #178, Darlene Michael, Jennifer Lowe, Cynthia Cobb