



Quarterly Managers' Report



Allen County
Public Library

Q4 2024

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Our Strategic Goals

CELEBRATING READING AND LEARNING

Through books, hands-on learning, technology, and valuing different perspectives, we celebrate individual and collective stories.

LEADING THROUGH INNOVATION

Through sustainable innovation and improvement, we thrive as a library and as a community.

CREATING A CULTURE OF BELONGING

Through our team, collections, and services, everyone has a home at ACPL.

DESIGNING FUNCTIONAL, FRIENDLY SPACES

Through accessible, intuitive, and easy to navigate physical and virtual spaces, our patrons discover all we have to offer.

CONNECTING COMMUNITY

Through collaborations with people and organizations, we strengthen our community and extend our reach.

Aboite Branch

Kris Lill, Branch Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Assistant branch manager Ajay Johnson worked with local artist Emily Guerrero to bring a wonderful art installation and event to several ACPL locations, including the Aboite branch, to celebrate Hispanic American Heritage Month. Emily installed a lovely piece of artwork demonstrating the Mexican game Loteria, then engaged patrons of all ages at an evening program by teaching them how to play this traditional Mexican game, helping them craft their own cards, and learn a little about Hispanic American culture.

Connecting Community

This quarter, I'd like to highlight a group who became friends through the ACPL many years ago, when the original branch manager, Susan Hunt, organized a "Cookbook Club". These ladies are still very much connected and still meet up regularly to share favorite recipes and cooking techniques, foodie tips, and, of course, friendship – which was fostered by the ACPL. They are a true testament to the ACPL's mission to enrich the community through lifelong learning and discovery.

Creating a Culture of Belonging

Senior Librarian Max Dion offered a "Spooky Snacks" program on the afternoon of Halloween, we were delighted when several students from the Children's Autism Center arrived and participated. A great time was had by all, look for more cooking programs for kids at Aboite in the future!

Leading Through Innovation

To kick off this final quarter of 2024, Aboite staff, along with the rest of the ACPL team, participated in Staff Development Day at the Grand Wayne Center. We were provided with training opportunities on a variety of topics, including personal health and wellness, customer service, early literacy, library services, and much more. This day is always an opportunity to build and grow bonds with each other and with colleagues from all over the ACPL system. Many thanks to the ACPL Board of Trustees, ACPL administrators, and the community for allowing for this day, and to the planning committee, who work hard for many months to make it happen.



Dupont Branch

Erin Warzala, Branch Manager

Creating a Culture of Belonging

The Dupont branch welcomed our first outreach librarian this past October! Naomi Vanderleest joined the team to bring library services out to our community. While Naomi serves all of the Dupont community, she has a focus on services for adults with IDD. Naomi has already hit the ground running by providing outreach to Life Adult Day Academy, Northrop High School, and has taken over as the lead for the All Abilities Program.

Connecting Community

We love hearing from our community! Whether it's through surveys, comment cards, or stopping by the desk to chat with staff, we appreciate our patrons taking the time to let us know how things are going. One of my favorite things, though, is when patrons leave us little notes to find throughout the library. We had an influx of these this quarter, including one left by a catalog computer wishing us a good day and another that said, "I like this library. It's fun here. I'll be back."

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

The Dupont branch's glow up continued in December with two major improvements!

First, we were able to increase the number of holds lockers that we have available to our patrons. We went from 53 lockers to a whopping 101! The additional lockers have allowed us to offer 24/7 access to holds for more patrons, and it has also made life a little bit easier for staff.

Second, we cleared out our back workroom to make space for three new staff workstations! When we gained an additional full-time staff member in the fall, we needed to ensure that all full-time staff had their own workstation. These additional workstations not only provide an appropriate workspace for our current staff, but they also give us the ability to continue to expand in the future.



Georgetown Branch

Stephen Platt, Manager

Creating a Culture of Belonging

AFTERSCHOOL AT THE LIBRARY FALL 2024 SEMESTER WRAP-UP

This semester we offered the after-school program 88 days (August – December). Each day we had an average attendance of 35 students for an overall total of 2,988 children between the ages of 10 and 14.

This is a 6% increase in the overall attendance from the 2023 Fall Semester After School Program, and it would appear that this program is still growing as more and more children are utilizing the library as a safe space after school.

AFTERSCHOOL PARTNERSHIP WITH 4H

This past semester we partnered with our local 4H to bring projects on Tuesdays. The majority of the activities that we offered daily for the students are planned and presented by library staff.

Connecting Community

OUTREACH

This past quarter our outreach librarian and support staff conducted more than 20 outside visits to various places in the community to represent the library. These included appearances at Deb's Day Care, Faith Baptist, Georgetown Senior Apartments, Georgetown Square, Blackhawk Middle School, Beacon Heights Apartments, North East Area Neighborhood Partnership Meetings, and Haley Elementary.

MENTAL HEALTH OF AMERICA NORTHEAST INDIANA

This is an ongoing partnership where MHANI presents a session of Art Therapy for Adults at the Georgetown Library on Tuesday mornings. It is entitled "Creative Minds" and each session is designed to help people to both create and heal through the process of creation. MHANI is also partnering with the library to bring a self-help book club for adults to the Georgetown Branch. The club is currently reading "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho.



Georgetown Branch

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

COMPUTER SPACE REORGANIZATION

Six more computers were moved to the space directly in front of the teen area in an effort to create an area where teens can relax when using the computers for study and research. Due to the open nature of the floor plan sound carries quite a bit, so we are always seeking creative ways to designate certain activities for certain spaces.



Leading Through Innovation

VIRTUAL REALITY

“Our Little Winter Wonderland” – This program during the fall and winter months and features the use of the library’s virtual reality headsets and 360 CoSpaces design software. Participants of the program are able to enter a virtual winter landscape and insert characters and objects into a playing field where they are able to code them to do certain things. Once they have collaboratively created the world they can enter it and experience it in three dimensions using the virtual reality headsets.



Grabill Branch

Rebecca Wolfe, Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Youth librarian Jennifer Spoelhof worked hard to create a connection with Cedarville Elementary School. We are visiting all eight kindergarten classes three times this year. We will repeat these visits with new kindergarten classes over the next few years and so will create meaningful connections with all of the students in the school. We're excited about this partnership!

Creating A Culture Of Belonging

Youth librarian Jennifer Spoelhof had a "Stuffed Animal Sleepover" at the Grabill branch. After a late afternoon storytime, children left their animals to party at the library overnight. Luckily, staff were still here a few minutes after closing when a child returned, having changed her mind about leaving her stuffy at the library! The children returned the next day to pick up booklets with pictures of their animals' adventures.



Connecting Community

Librarian Susan Pratt makes monthly visits to The Cedars, a retirement facility near the Grabill branch. In this "Book Talks" program, members discuss what they've been reading. Susan shares some interesting books from the ACPL collection, which often leads to good discussions and much reminiscing. Susan is great at facilitating these discussions. The meetings average about a dozen attendees, and members really enjoy the chats.

Leading Through Innovation

Manager Rebecca Wolfe made some presentations on library programming for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities:

- Member of panel, Pennsylvania Library Association Conference
- Virtual training session for Plum Borough Community Library (PA) Staff Day
- Webinar through Northeast Ohio Regional Library System
- Webinar for SELCO – Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (MN)

Hessen Cassel Branch

Edith Helbert, Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Stuffed Animal Sleepover, pictured below, happens once a year. Children bring their favorite stuffy to a special storytime, then leave them overnight to “sleep over” with staff. Staff then take photos of each child’s stuffed animal engaged in various library activities and compile them into a book, and when the child picks up their stuffed animal the next day, they also get a keepsake book.



Connecting Community

One cold Wednesday afternoon in early December, several youth who regularly walk to the library to use the internet heard crying near our building. They investigated and discovered a small kitten, who they brought to the front desk. Our library staff jumped into action, reaching out immediately to Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control while also finding a box and towel to keep the kitten contained and warm. By the time FWACC staff arrived, the kitten had won the hearts of one of our staff who adopted him that night! The youngsters saved a young kitten, learned about local animal shelters and what to do when they find a lost or hurt animal, AND they made deeper connections with the staff.

Creating a Culture of Belonging

Over the past year, we’ve observed more and more patrons using Hessen Cassel who want to read for themselves or to their children in Spanish. We worked with the Collection Development Team to build up our collection and now the World Language area has grown from 1 to 6 shelves, with a solid mix of classics, new fiction, and recent nonfiction. In November we moved the World Language section to a more visible area, and relocated a few other small collections to increase their visibility as well.

During winter break, we serve as a “third place” for teens and tweens. Throughout this year’s break, we offered a variety of passive programs for all ages, including a 1000-piece puzzle that was available to the public, a sticker-poster, make-and-take crafts for various ages, and winter crosswords, coloring pages, and word searches.

Leading Through Innovation

The 3D Printer continues to be an attention-grabber since its introduction about a year ago. Because it is highly visible at the front desk, it gets a lot of attention from everyone who comes in. The Studio programs are always full with a waiting list, and those that use the 3D printer are currently the most popular. Open hours in The Studio are available. Patrons who aren’t ready for self-guided activities yet, are more interested in classes

Little Turtle Branch

Deb Meserve, Branch Manager

Connecting Community

Deborah started getting to know the Little Turtle community by participating in Trinity Lutheran Church's Community Outreach Event and attending her first Northwest Area Partnership meeting.

Creating a Culture of Belonging

Little Turtle staff welcomed Mari Hardacre as the new Youth Librarian and Deborah Meserve as Branch Manager.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Fall was full of moving and shifting of shelves and collections in preparation for LTL's StoryScope. Much thanks to all the LTL staff and Maintenance for working together to get everything done! Patrons are enjoying the new location of the Video Game and DVD collections near the entrance of the branch.

Maintenance made short work of shifting our shelving to make room for the Storyscope.

It gave us the opportunity to give Teens a more defined space just for them.

Sam the Snowman has welcomed patrons to browse holiday collections and usher in the New Year with Spring DIY projects.

A cozy "fire" awaits those who use the newly placed table by the Seed Library.



Monroeville Branch

Chris Wiljer, Branch Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

In the last quarter, the Monroeville Branch presented a number of hands-on programs including Shrinky Dinks, Colorful Collages and Winter Mirror Art. With the Shrinky Dink program, participants were able to turn doodles into a customized keychain, piece of jewelry or bookmark charm. In the Colorful Collage program, toddlers created a 2D collage and a 3D collage using contact paper. In the Winter Mirror Art, aspiring artists created winter designs on small panels of mirror.

Our monthly scrapbooking programs created opportunities for patrons to display precious family photographs in an artistic fashion. This program allows patrons to express their individuality and add their own twist by embellishing personal photographs on a theme-based layout. Some of the themes include treasured memories, “just horsing around” and family. This program has evolved into a community of dedicated scrapbookers who are willing to share their perspectives and life experiences.

Creating a Culture of Belonging

The Monroeville Branch exhibited a number of holiday displays featuring books from many different holidays including Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza. In addition, holiday decorations and special bulletin board displays helped make the Branch festive for the season. Some of these displays allowed children to add their own paper stockings and mugs so that they can be included in the fun. Santa made a special visit on December 5 allowing local children the opportunity to meet him and express their holiday wishes to him. During the last week two weeks of December, patrons will be able to view the annual model train demonstration provided by “Three Rivers and Indiana Northern Railroad” model railroading club based out of the Fort Wayne area.

Leading Through Innovation

Last year, a yearly endowment fund from the Community Foundation was granted to the Monroeville Branch for the expansion of youth engagement. A team of ACPL staff members selected a variety of play structures, interactives and children’s furniture to improve the children’s space. The goal is to make the Monroeville Branch more of a destination of youth. These items are expected to be installed in the first quarter of 2025.

New Haven Branch

Marie Kaufmann, Branch Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

When the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library officially opened for Allen County residents the New Haven Branch used the display case to promote the program. The display case featured informational and promotional materials about the program as well as an array of books that were selected for each age group in the Imagination Library and what participants can expect to receive in the future. Many New Haven patrons have asked questions and signed their little ones up for the program in response to the display.

Once again, the New Haven Branch created a spooky but not too spooky Halloween Maze in their meeting room. The theme of this year's maze was Pirates which featured a ship and other pirate associated objects. While weaving your way through the maze you might spot Davy Jones' Locker with a glowing heart, a mermaid skeleton or giant kraken. Thematic music and sounds played while adventurers passed through the maze. The maze took place over three days during the second week of October and over 200 people completed the trip through the maze.



Connecting Community

Before the month of December began the New Haven Branch reserved the keyboard from the Library of Things so that branch assistant, Serena Broxon could play the piano during their off-desk hours during the month of December. Their playing filled the library with relaxing, joyful, and familiar holiday music. One patron even remarked they thought the branch had a CD playing because they didn't see Serena playing in the Teen Area. It made the atmosphere at the branch festive, welcoming and special during the cloudy days of December.

Pontiac Branch

Joy Witherspoon, Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Pontiac has its very own studio that is open to the public! During one of the Open Hours sessions, Kerstin and Jerome led a pop-up program for some local youth. They assisted them with using the 3D printer and telling them about the other cool technology they can use in the space. Meisha led a Halloween themed experience with Virtual Reality headsets. This allowed some young patrons to experience some spooky scenes, and they were amazed, to say the least.



Connecting Community

Pontiac's staff were active in the community this Fall. We connected with almost 900 members of the community in October alone.

Joy and Kiera (Hessen Cassel) attended a Pumpkin Patch event at the Renaissance YMCA. Attendees received ACPL merch and scratch art kits while enjoying an event filled with activities and a performance by a local dance troupe.

A special thank you to Bree and Mari (Little Turtle) for braving the cold and rain to attend the Urban League's Annual Trunk or Treat! They handed out many books in 3 different languages in addition to some Halloween-themed bookmarks and, of course, candy!

The last major outreach of the quarter was for Weisser Park's "Winter Wonderland" themed literacy night. Meisha and Bree showed up to provide library card sign-ups, offered a snowflake craft, and told families all about the wonderful things their local library system is up to.

On behalf of all staff at the Pontiac branch, I want to express how much these community events mean to us. They are one of many ways we can serve this community. Continue to contact us with these events; we would be happy to attend!



Shawnee Branch

Linette Miller, Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Daycare outreach storytimes have connected several daycares in our community with books and positive interactions with our Shawnee Youth Librarian.

Leading Through Innovation

Shawnee hosted 13 Studio programs, giving our patrons access to technological tools. Staff from Shawnee also assisted with Staff Day programs designed to familiarize staff from other locations with the Studio's technology.



Tecumseh Branch

Deb Noggle, Branch Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

GENEALOGY PROGRAMMING AT TECUMSEH

In 2014, the North Anthony Boulevard was recognized as Historic. The development of the North Anthony Boulevard Historic District is broken into two with the southern district beginning development in the 1910s and the northernmost of the district seeing development in the 1950's. The Tecumseh Branch was pleased to welcome Genealogy Librarian, John Beatty, as a presenter of Uncovering Your Home's Story for the patrons who live in the historic district of North Anthony Blvd. Some patrons who attended the program were also in attendance of the Kensington Blvd. Historic Walk with Genealogy in October. Many patrons voiced their excitement of not having to travel far from their neighborhood to attend Genealogy programs at their local branch.

STAFF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

This quarter, our Youth Librarian and our All Ages/ Outreach Librarian participated in multiple trainings on Community Building Practices. Our Assistant Manager completed the months-long training in the Leadership Cohort, and our All Ages/Outreach Librarian participated in the Teen Cohort. Two of our staff members learned about suicide prevention in the QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training offered by representatives from Indiana University.

Connecting Community

FORT WAYNE MUSEUM OF ART VISIT

Fort Wayne Museum of Art's Gallery on Wheels stopped by Tecumseh in November to celebrate Native American Heritage Month. Teens were provided the opportunity to view pieces from the 2022-2023 collection, Breathing Life into History: Contemporary Native American Art. The digital exhibit included artwork from artists such as Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Wendy Red Star, and Duane Slick. After reflecting on the pieces shown, teens were provided time to create art of their own.

TECUMSEH VISITS NORTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOL

On average the Tecumseh Branch may see 10-20 North Side High School students per week. To encourage teens to come into the branch and participate in Teen Programs, Outreach Librarian met with NSHS students during their lunch time to discuss upcoming programs and provide a sweet treat before Halloween. Many of the teens expressed interest in programming and applying for summer positions when Spring rolls around. Some teens provided feedback that they are not always able to get a ride to programs or that they have time/date can create schedule conflicts. However, many of the teens were grateful that ACPL staff were able to meet them in their space and speak with them.

FIRST STEPS IN MUSIC

We partner with the Fort Wayne Children's Choir to offer a program that introduces toddlers and preschoolers to music. This program was a big hit at Tecumseh—kids and parents sing, dance, play simple instruments and enjoy bopping and moving to music in this very interactive program.

Tecumseh Branch

Creating a Culture of Belonging

27TH ANNUAL WINTERFEST AT TECUMSEH

The holiday season offers our branch an opportunity to celebrate our connections with patrons through Winterfest. Tecumseh Branch has held Winterfest each year for 27 years during the two weeks when schools are closed for the holidays. We hold special winter-themed programs, offer table crafts all day each day, and have a free Hot Cocoa Bar for all patrons both Fridays of the weeks! It's our way of celebrating the season with our neighborhood and its people!



Leading Through Innovation

POP-UP PROGRAM: FRANKEN-STUFFED ANIMALS

There are teens that come every Wednesday after school. We had nothing planned on Wednesday the 30th of October, when a large group of not only teens, but also tweens came to the branch around 3:00pm. We had a lot of stuffed animals left over from the program last year and the teens had been asking when we could do it again, so we brought them all out. Participants could cut apart stuffed animals and use the pieces to build a new stuffed animal. The teens and the tweens worked well together, and encouraged creativity in their animals. We had only offered hot glue guns last year, but this year we also offered needle and thread as an option to piece together their creations. We were surprised by how many of the teens and tweens wanted to learn how to sew. It was fun to watch their creativity and how proud they were of the end results. There was a lot of encouragement from all the kids to each other and so many of them wanted me to take pictures of their creations.



Waynedale Branch

Amanda Vance, Manager

Connecting Community

As in years past, the Waynedale Branch hosted the Annual Waynedale Wreath Auction in late November. The auction benefits the Waynedale Trails and Sidewalks Initiative to continue to expand access to the central Waynedale area. During the 2-week auction time, the community can find the wreaths on display at the branch along the back wall of windows.



Creating a Culture of Belonging

Working with our community members to help them solve challenges and fulfill daily needs doesn't always get attention but it's a huge part of why we love working in the library. Here are a few examples of wins we had with patrons this quarter:

A patron came in needing to extend a VISA. Staff assisted in helping this person to find the form needed, recover their account information, and get them set up to apply on the website.

As the Waynedale Community changes, so too do the needs of our patrons. In November, a patron came in to help get a lease agreement translated from English to Spanish. Staff were able to obtain resources for this person to contact local translation services to make sure they had the correct information.

Being located between the BMV branch on Bluffton Rd and the Social Security Office, we get many requests to assist in helping patrons access official documentation. One such example in December, a patron needed to access an email account to download and fill out a form. This required a password reset for email, downloading and printing the form, and then scanning the form back to email once it had been filled out. This can be quite an involved process, especially for those who might not interact with technology often.

Woodburn Branch

Paige Shook, Branch Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

It was a full house at our October's Kids Cooking Program: Spooky Snacks! The cooking programs for kids are some of our most popular programs, and it's easy to see why. This program teaches kids how to read recipes and follow their directions, then they get to experience new foods and explore flavor combinations.

This October featured several different Halloween-themed snacks, some sweet (like witch's bark) and some savory (like Mini Mummy Pizzas). According to the kids, the favorite snack of the day was "used bandages." Not only did they learn valuable kitchen skills, like holding a knife, spreading, and mixing food colors and frosting, but we also learned about different types of infections as the kids created their used bandage masterpieces.

What is a used bandage? Simple – it's just a graham cracker with white frosting in the middle, mixed with a bit of food coloring (red for blood, green for infections/drainage, or yellow for pus). Delicious!

Connecting Community

October through December is peak outreach time for the Woodburn Branch. Our staff bustled all around to promote ACPL at several seasonal events in and around the Woodburn community:

- Indiana Wild's Trunk or Treat
- Woodburn Lutheran School's Trunk or Treat
- Pumpkin Decorating contest for Woodburn businesses
- Pumpkin Decorating contest for ACPL
- Holiday Craft Fair at Woodburn City Hall
- Santa Day at Truland Equipment
- City Santa at the clock tower

The Trunk-or-Treats were particularly successful, with approximately 400 people each time! It was wonderful to see both new and familiar faces come by our booths for crafts, candies, and swag and get excited about what our library has to offer.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

One of Woodburn's strengths is creating functional, friendly spaces through original art, crafts, and (often handmade) decorations.

Branch Assistants Helena Emenhiser and Katie Pilditch are the brains and artists behind many of those beautiful decorations and crafts scattered throughout the Woodburn branch – they know a thing or two about how to make our space fun and enjoyable for all patrons.

Just in this quarter alone, they've done coordinating scenes for fall & winter in the front windows, covered the place in paper snowflakes for winter, created an interactive gingerbread house for kids (complete with two hand-drawn, hand-cut gingerbread people), and constructed two decorative book trees for the holidays.

We receive compliments from patrons daily about the quality of the art and the welcoming, fun space we've created for the public to enjoy.

Access Fort Wayne

Norm Compton, AFW Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

This quarter we offered 24 different programs in the Studio at Main. We had 94 people participate in hands-on learning. We teach broadcast technology as well and had 18 people learn TV production and 22 learn about our radio station WELT 95.7 FM.

Creating a Culture of Belonging

October 1 was ACPL's Staff Day and AFW was involved on many levels. We mobilized some of the Studio technology and put on a Virtual Reality experience for ACPL employees, and we made video elements for presentations.

On December 9 we held our annual Holiday Party bringing more than 80 TV and radio producers and volunteers together to network and connect.

Connecting Community

Through AFW services, we provide a portal to City and County government. This quarter we recorded 82 government meetings that were streamed, viewed, and listened to across the region. These collaborations educate our citizens, and foster better connections for ACPL with the City and County.

AFW has been collaborating with WBOI's Julia Meek to record Meet the Music most Thursdays in Studio A for WBOI and AFW. Many of the musicians have performed at Rock the Plaza.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

The studios and facilities at AFW are world-class and available to everyone in Allen County. This quarter we had 565 reservations to use our facilities, an average of 6 times every day, making 365 TV shows and 906 radio shows. That is 775 hours of media content created and shared through our media outlets.

Adult Services

Traci Ward, Adult Services Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Kay Gregg and Meg Bell received an awesome mention for Pages and Voices in Gladieux Consulting's fall newsletter, in the *Shine on Spotlight* section.



Connecting Community

We had a great time with the holiday season, participating in everything from a Holiday Sing-Along and Seasons Readings to Cookies/Cocoa and hosting the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. More than 1,000 people joined in all of these events.



Creating a Culture of Belonging

Nancy Saff had a great turn out for the November Great Day Cafe, themed "Fall Means Football." There were 18 participants who enjoyed Chex Mix and Gatorade while competing in football trivia and a football match game. Everyone enjoyed the fun, games, and camaraderie.

On December 8, we hosted the Sweetwater All Stars. Thank you to Liisa Wiljer for organizing this—182 people attended the concert.



Audio Reading Service

Monica Hadsall, Manager

Creating a Culture of Belonging

In the fourth quarter of 2024, ACPL received \$13,675.11 in added value through the services of 84 volunteers (FTE=2.29) who gave 1,192.25 hours of service. We also welcomed two new volunteers.

Chad Butterbaugh, Senior Production Assistant, continues contributing to ACPL's DEI Committee.

George served on the planning team for the Library's Great Day Café programs for people with dementia and their caretakers.

We welcomed Monica Hadsall as the new Audio Reading Service Manager on December 17th. George retired on December 31.



Celebrating Reading and Learning

The Audio Reading Service broadcasted 55 individual programs utilizing 130 sources. We provided a monthly average of 728 hours of broadcast and 300 programs which enrich the lives of listeners. Some feedback we have received:

“ Your content has always been consistently high quality.

Evan Starnes, Audio Production Tech, Aftersight Reading Service, Colorado

All Audio Reading Services staff attended the 2024 Staff day.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

New furniture was installed in our Control Room and Live Reading Studio to accommodate new equipment, making it easier and more efficient for staff and volunteers to read, record, and deliver quality broadcasts and recordings to our listeners.

Leading Through Innovation

Thanks to a grant from the AWS Foundation, the Audio Reading Service is in the beginning stages of installing upgraded recording and broadcasting equipment to better serve our listeners.

Audio Reading Service

Connecting Community

As a member of the Northeast Indiana Disabilities Advocacy Coalition (NEIDAC), George served on the organization's Education/Networking Committee.

George served as Secretary to the Board of Directors of the International Association of Audio Information Services (IAAIS).

George presented information about the Audio Reading Service to New Employee Orientation, and represented ARS at Council on Senior Services.

During the fourth quarter of 2024, ARS received \$1,910.00 in financial gifts. A large portion of this amount was donated in memorial of a long-time listener, whose daughter has previously shared with us:

“ Thank you so much for this service. My mom depends upon it for her daily news. One of the best features of your service for my mom is the human voice. She is 94, blind, and lives alone... your readers are her companions.



Communications, Marketing, & Web

Aja Michael-Keller,
Director of
Communications

Celebrating Reading and Learning

Marketing and Digital Communications were instrumental to the successful launch of our Dolly Parton's Imagination Library registration campaign. We utilized a marketing mix comprised of: Media outreach (resulting in 122 individual media mentions, a media reach of 4.73 million, and earned media value of \$32.5k), Print Collateral, direct email to patrons, banners on our app and web, organic social media posts, and paid social media advertising. We set an initial goal of 5000 sign-ups by the end of 2025, but by the end of 2024 – we'd already exceeded that goal, with plans for much more outreach to come! In fact, the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library leadership in Tennessee shared that we had the most registrations in the country for the month of December.

Marketing provided extensive promotional support for the McMurty Lecture, "Held In War's Grasp: The Ordeals of Veteranhood after the Civil War." Our efforts included radio promotions, television commercials, newspaper ads, and a press release, among others. As a result, the event was well attended by community members

Creating a Culture of Belonging

We added Fall and Winter items to the merchandise store, including hats, scarves, hoodies, and more. A 10% discount was offered from Black Friday through Giving Tuesday to encourage shopping. All proceeds from the APCL store benefit the Friends of the Library. It is a great way to support the Friends, create a sense of camaraderie, and show off your ACPL pride!!

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

As part of the library's Strategic Plan, the Marketing team has completed the designs for the StoryScapes at the Little Turtle, Grabill, and Monroeville locations. The installation of these graphics is scheduled for 2025.

We also designed and coordinated the installation of the wall graphic for The Hive, a new space in the Children's Department at Main, tailored for children in grades 4 to 6. The Hive features interactive elements, furniture, board games, computers, and math skill activities for upper elementary-aged youth. It also includes educational items presented as entertainment.

Communications, Marketing & Web

Connecting Community

The ACPL enjoyed 711 mentions for an average of 7 mentions per day. We had an earned media value of \$529,000 dollars and an editorial reach of 60.1 million impressions. Our most popular stories were the grand opening of The Hive and the launch of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

When comparing earned media reach from 2024 to the previous year, we enjoyed 2.76 thousand mentions (average of 7/day) which equates to a 98% growth over 2023. We had a reach of 464 million impressions (an average of 1.27 million/day). Our earned media value was 4.13 million dollars.

In Social Media, comparing Q4 to Q3, reach is up 23.6% (196.6k accounts) interactions were up 83.4% (15.1k) and visits were up 48.6% (24.4k). Top social media posts include: Imagination Library \$100k Funding Milestone Achieved; Pumpkin Decorating Contest; Author Visit: Leah Johnson; and the Discover the History of Your Home-Genealogy. We promoted the Imagination Library with a call to action to register children in Allen County via paid social media and email marketing. Our team achieved 5,000 sign-ups from launch to the end of the year.

Leading Through Innovation

We introduced a new Genealogy library card for our numerous national and international patrons of the Genealogy Center. This card will enable users to create accounts within our system, maintain reading lists, and access our PC reservation and print/copy systems. This initiative will significantly benefit the library by providing a new method to track the use of our collections and services and to communicate with our national and global patrons.

Events

Leanne Bure, Events Manager

Connecting Community

In the month of October, we saw the Spinning and Weavers Guild return to host demonstrations in the Great Hall to highlight equipment and techniques. Patrons enjoyed watching looms and talking with guild members. The Mexican Consulate returned October 15-19 to provide documentation services to 679 patrons. This included 892 processed documents (passports, consular ids, and voting ids). The 15th year of Fright Night returned to the Plaza on October 19. This annual downtown event brings a diverse crowd of Zombies to the library with the opportunity to engage in programming and explore the building.

In the month of November, we had Daughters of the American Revolution host a reception in the Discovery Center for a temporary exhibit hosted in Genealogy. Events collaborated with Genealogy staff to create a wonderful environment to host guests. Events aided our colleagues in Access Fort Wayne on a remote livestream adventure at Parkview Field that saw the U.S. Capital Tree displayed. We participated in the annual Night of Lights by serving cocoa and cookies to more than 450 guests in the Great Hall. We packed up and took AV on the road to Aboite for the Board of Trustees meeting to livestream. Maintenance lent aid to Events as we decorated the Great Hall for the holiday season.

In the month of December, we set the stage for the annual fan favorite, Seasons Readings, where ACPL staff were warm and cozy sharing stories and music. Events set the Great Hall to welcome two elementary choirs to perform holiday classics in front of family and friends. We saw more than 13 dance and music recitals along with school plays. The Theater was the venue for a public movie screening of Preconceived by the Planned Parenthood organization. We rounded out the year supporting the Children's Department in their New Year's program by setting up a projector to display a clock countdown for Countdown to Noon.



Events

Q4 EVENTS	OCT	NOV	DEC
Events (non-ACPL)	111	133	153
Attendance	3,774	3,955	4,550

Total non-ACPL events 397

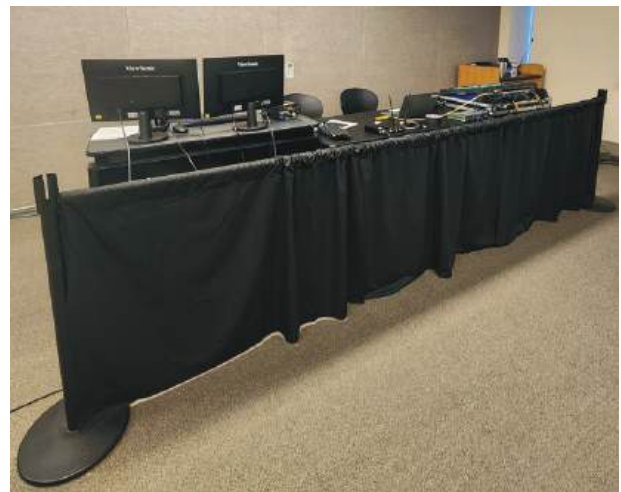
Total events attendance 12,279

Creating a Culture of Belonging

The Event team supported Staff Day at Main and over at the Grand Wayne. We began the day at 6:30 loading up a courier truck with materials and AV equipment for a full day of development, learning, and collaboration. Donnie David, Sr. Tech and Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Team member, staffed a button station to provide colleagues with a place to design and display individual vibes and interests.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Rachel Lancaster busted out her mad sewing skills using The Studio sewing machine to create trade show worthy drape to conceal AV equipment during the BOT meetings.



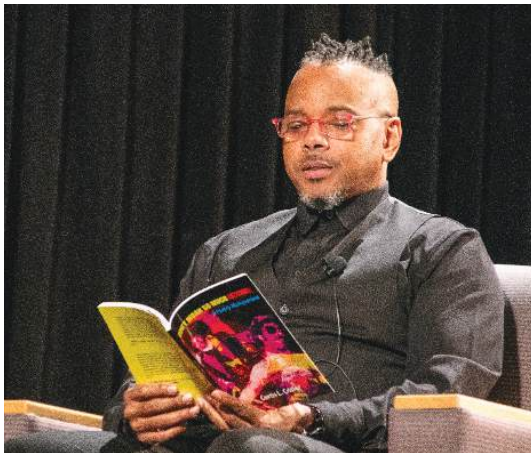
Human Resources

LaRae Bane, Director of Human Resources

Creating a Culture of Belonging

Diana, our Employee Experience Coordinator, along with Leanne, Events Manager, and a committee organized an incredible Staff Day at the Grand Wayne Center on October 1, 2024. We invited Curtis Crisler, the Indiana Poet Laureate as our keynote speaker to kick off the event. Break-out sessions included topics around Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, De-escalation, self-defense, watercolor painting, yoga, understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, workplace burnout, disability as DEI, working with neurodivergence, and early literacy. Staff also created poster sessions on whatever topic they'd like. We have some incredibly talented individuals working at ACPL!

We wished a 'happy retirement' to Susan Ricker (Youth Services Specialist, 13 years of service), Samuel Jimenez (Senior IT Technician, 32 years of service), John Wagner (Maintenance Technician, 17 years of service), and George Johnson-Coffey (Audio Reading Services Manager, 10 years of service).



Connecting Community

After several months of creating procedures, guidelines, and connecting with partners in the community, our Social Services Coordinator began officially meeting with patrons. We are excited to be able to offer this service to patrons at any branch.

We also hired our first Bilingual Program & Partnership Specialist, who will focus on programming for patrons who speak languages other than English.

Our Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion team approved two more staff circles – one for Black, Indigenous, People of Color employees and their allies and another for neurodiverse staff and their allies.

IT Services

Kevin Wells, IT Services Manager

Creating a Culture of Belonging

We celebrated the retirement of Sam Jimenez, Senior IT Technician, who dedicated over 32 years of service to our organization. Sam was one of the founding members of the IT Services Department, which was known as Systems at that time. He started as a part-time employee, performing the evening backup of GEAC, the ILS we used back then. It's worth noting that our computer network was neither as large nor as complex at that time.

Throughout his 32 years as a full-time employee, Sam advanced from Systems Technician to Senior IT Technician. During his tenure, he supported library staff through numerous technology transitions, including four Integrated Library Systems (GEAC, Sirsi, Wise, Polaris), four email systems (Pegasus, GroupWise, Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft 365), four Windows Operating Systems (Windows 95, XP, 7, and 10), three different phone systems, and an expansion from a handful of staff and public computers to well over 900 by his last day. Sam was a wonderful mentor and highly respected by all IT staff. His knowledge, friendly demeanor, professionalism, and smile made him a highly sought-after technician by staff.

Sam left some big shoes to fill, but we found the right person for the job. We welcome Matt McGregor to the team. Matt joins us from Adams Memorial Hospital, bringing with him a wealth of experience in user support, hardware and software troubleshooting, and cloud-based service management. His expertise aligns perfectly with his new role.

In addition to Matt, I'd also like to welcome Chet Miller, who fills the Network Technician vacancy created when Courtney Borage accepted a Technology Engineer position with an organization in Dallas, Texas. Although Courtney was with us for a short time, she made a significant positive impact on all of us. Along with providing exceptional customer service and IT support, Courtney was a trendsetter, never missing a chance to show her spirit during National Library Week or Halloween.

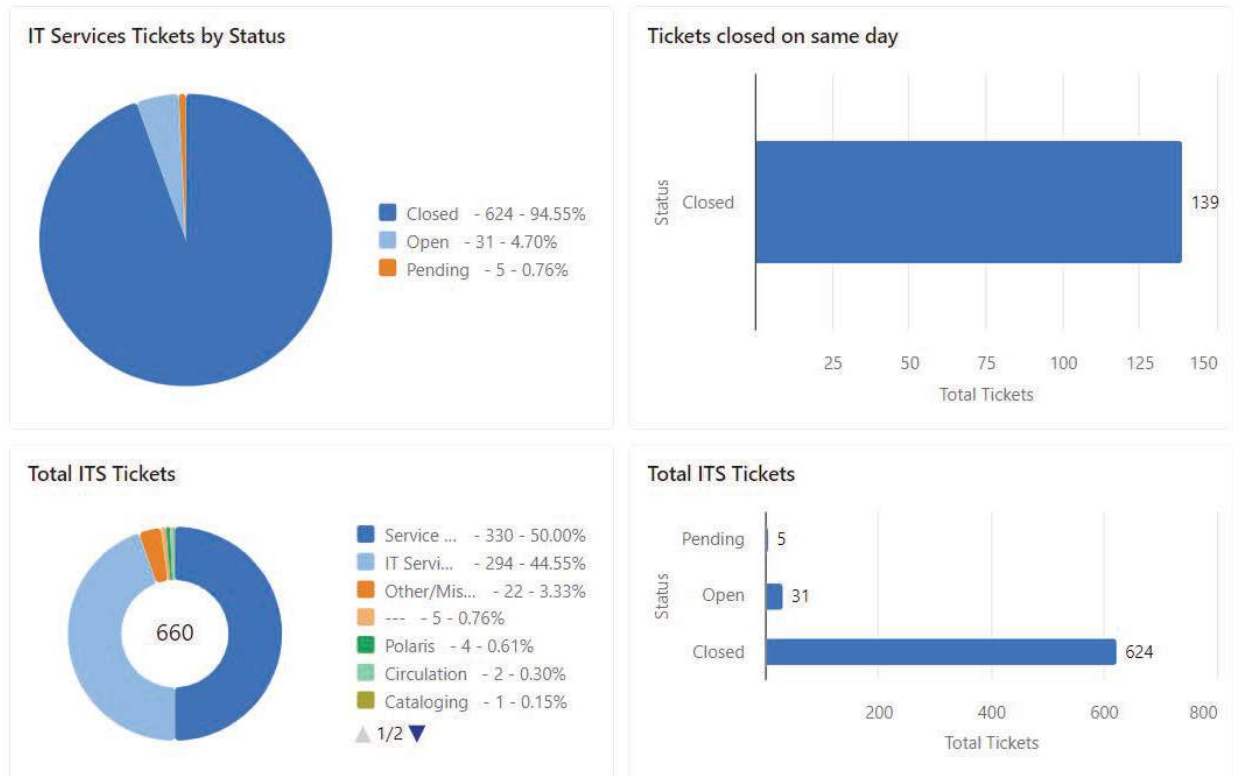
Sam and Courtney will be missed, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.



IT Services

Leading Through Innovation

For the last quarter of 2024, IT Services successfully closed 624 out of the 660 assigned tickets, achieving a completion rate of 94.54%. 22.27% of our tickets were closed on the same day they were reported. We ended 2024 with a completion rate of 95.98% and we averaged 20.38% for tickets closed on the same day.



Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

We close out 2024 knowing we helped bring the HIVE in Children’s Services online and added additional public computers to their department. We also relocated a few self-checks at Dupont and Georgetown, improving patron accessibility to these services and enhancing workflows for library staff. We continue to strengthen our network security footprint and collaborate with library staff to provide the technical resources they need to serve our community.

With the help of Mike Targgart (Network Services Manager), Daniel Stewart (Software Engineer), Chris Erick (Network Specialist and Microsoft 365 Wizard), Maria Tostado and Oscar Sanchez (Network Technicians), Megan Stoffer (IT Support Specialist), and the newcomers Matt McGregor and Chet Miller, we will continue to put the “serve” back into IT Services.

Library At Home

Jon Frincke, Supervisor

Celebrating Reading and Learning

In November, Jon took a unique collection to Evergreen Village. Having heard from residents and staff alike that folks miss searching for and purchasing books from our Friends of the Library sales, and hoping for ever more and new engagement opportunities, Library at Home was able to attract 20 customers to a used book sale in the community.

Connecting Community

Our entire department was thrilled to attend the 2024 conference of the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services. This year, Jon drove the Library at Home vehicle to Indianapolis for display and touring alongside other outreach vans and bookmobiles, from vendors and libraries as far afield as New Orleans, Portland, and Austin. ACPL was very well represented, with three Library at Home team members, one branch Outreach librarian, and two Genealogy librarians.



Creating a Culture of Belonging

Library at Home has been bringing more services to new and existing facility partners. This quarter, we added rotating collections, enrichment programming, and home delivery at three additional locations.

To get more library cards into the hands of people who need them, Library at Home now offers registration assistance for patrons who may not qualify for home delivery. At pop-up stop locations that see traffic from low-income as well as senior and disabled communities, either onsite paper application or online registration using a library iPad can be especially helpful.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Based on the success of our book drop-box at StoryPoint North, in December we introduced a second at Five Star Residences. The book drop-boxes remind residents of the communities we visit that the library is a presence where they live, even if they only see us once or twice a month. They also prevent our books from ending up on a random table or shelf, with another resident who did not check the item out, or crowding the offices of our facility staff partners, making everyone's life just that much more pleasant.

Special Collections

Curt Witcher, Director of Special Collections

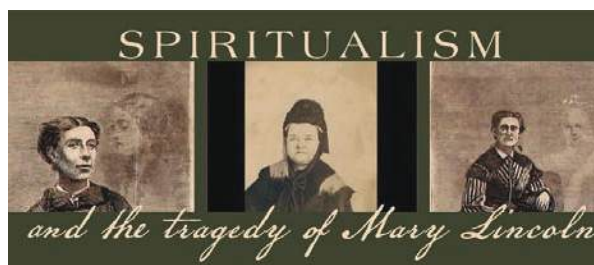
Celebrating Reading and Learning

Work on the multi-year access project of organizing and cataloging our federal government documents collection progressed quite nicely in the last quarter of this year, and indeed throughout all of 2024. Our senior government documents librarian, Jacob Schmotzer, has been leading these efforts; efforts that saw 3,977 items cataloged this year and more than 420 shelves organized by members of the Materials Support Services staff. This access initiative continues to make more of this important collection available to our patrons through the catalog. Wayne New Tech high students benefited earlier in the year from access to this collection, and were amazed at the “cool” publications one can find.

In the last quarter of this year, another collection was added to the Community Album, the Moellering Family Collection. This was a prominent Fort Wayne family, and joins the Hanna Family as impressive pieces from Fort Wayne’s past. 4,010 new items were added to the Community Album in 2024.

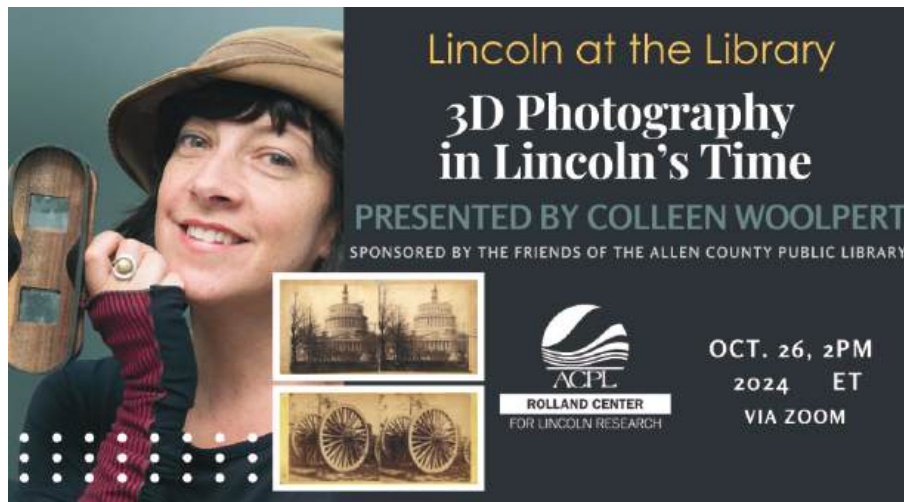
The last quarter of the year evidenced a robust collection of public programming across Special Collections. The annual celebration of Family History Month in October saw more than two thousand individuals attend virtual and in-person programs. The Genealogy Center’s social media was well-embraced in October as well. The Facebook and Instagram pages featured four videos throughout the month of October, each approximately 3-4 minutes long, showcasing a virtual cemetery tour of Lindenwood Cemetery. For Facebook, the content reached 9,400 unique viewers. Engagement was positive, with the total watch time for these videos reaching 8 hours and 49 minutes. The Genealogy Center’s Instagram page saw 6,913 total video views. Engagement was strong, with 321 content interactions—a notable 36.6% increase compared to the previous month. ACPL staff as well as librarians from across Indiana were able to earn LEUs for much of the Family History Month programming.

Our senior Lincoln Librarians presented two virtual programs in October and December respectively. Both were well-received and are now a part of the Rolland Center’s YouTube offerings. On October 29, 2024, Abbie Meek presented a program on the Lincoln Family Album. It was a nice complement to Family History Month programming. On December 18, 2024, Jessie Cortesi presented a program entitled, “Spiritualism and the Tragedy of Mary Lincoln.” Jessie explained the extremely popular Spiritualist movement of the Victorian period and related how Mary Lincoln coped with grief through her involvement in it. Mourning the loss of her husband and three of her four children, Mrs. Lincoln found consolation in the belief that the living could communicate with the dead.

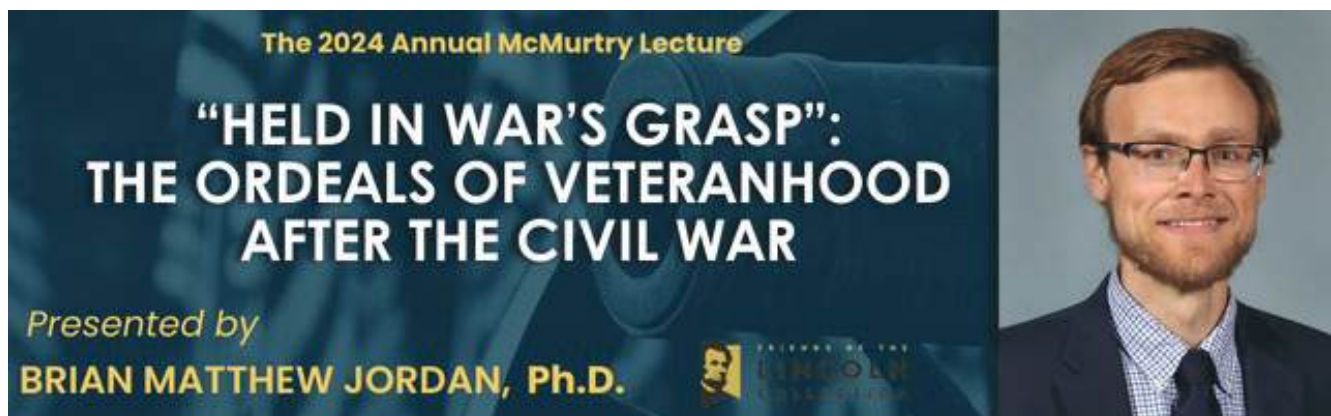


Special Collections

On October 26, 2024 the Lincoln Librarians coordinated the presentation of the second 2024 “Lincoln at the Library” presentation. Funded by the Friends of the Allen County Public Library, Colleen Woolpert presented “3D Photography in Lincoln’s Time” in which she spoke about stereographs and the viewers used to enjoy them. The Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection holds numerous stereographs featuring President Abraham Lincoln and Civil War scenes, and this program introduced attendees to those wonderful assets and provided us with ideas for highlighting those engaging items in the future.



Collaborating with the Friends of the Lincoln Collection, the 2024 Annual McMurtry Lecture, “‘Held in War’s Grasp’: The Ordeals of Veteranhood after the Civil War” was presented on Monday evening, November 11, 2024 by Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan. Dr. Jordan has written extensively on the veterans of the Civil War including the awarding-winning “Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War” and five other books on Civil War soldiers, veterans, and memory. Civil War and Abraham Lincoln enthusiasts enjoyed the in-person presentation in the library Theater while many dozens participated online. The veterans in the Theater were particularly appreciative of Dr. Jordan’s treatment of the specifics of what happens to soldiers after their wartime engagements. The Q & A was particularly rich with additional information and put a finer point on many themes in the main presentation.



Special Collections

The Genealogy Center added another licensed database to its offerings, Vintage Aerial. Debuting on November 20, 2024, this resource offers access to many millions of historical aerial photographs covering 41 of our 50 states. This unique collection provides an in-depth visual record of rural landscapes from the 1960s through the early 2000s, enabling patrons to uncover personal and community histories through this extensive and captivating archive. There are over fifty-four thousand images of Allen County, IN historic properties, part of the larger collection of more than nineteen million images from across the United States. Increasingly genealogists and family historians seek information that places their ancestors' lives in context and marries history to names and dates. This database is such an information source. A press conference and special public program launched this resource.

To coincide with this year's elections, our Lincoln Librarians put together a special "Election of 1864" exhibit case. This important election became a referendum on the Union war effort and on emancipation. Republicans rebranded themselves as the National Party in 1864 to make the party's goal of preserving the Union, putting down the rebellion, and abolishing slavery absolutely clear. A number of visitors to the Center have noted how critical this election was for the nation. Some visitors mused about the critical importance of many of the nation's elections. A view of the Election of 1864 case is below.



Our Lincoln Librarians worked with Kay Gregg of AFW to film three new "History in Brief" educational videos and posted those as resources on the Friends of the Lincoln Collection website under the Educators tab. Each video is approximately three minutes long. A list of the new videos with website descriptions is below.

1. The Battle of Gettysburg

Learn about the bloodiest battle of the Civil War and how President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address reframed the meaning of the war.

2. General Ulysses S. Grant

Learn about General Ulysses S. Grant's military accomplishments during the Civil War, which helped propel him to the White House by 1869.

3. The Life of a Civil War Soldier

Learn about the life of a Civil War soldier, from enlistment to camp life, on the battlefield, and, in some cases, military prison, and how soldiers dealt with the harsh conditions of the war.

Special Collections

Supported by our Lincoln Librarians, our Educational Outreach Coordinator, Sarah Schoolman continued to make amazing numbers of contacts with educators and students. She is supporting educators with enrichment classes, first grade read-alouds, and special programming such as "Civil War Espionage." Her work with specific educators is beginning to have a ripple effect as those educators share Sarah's abilities and educational assets found under the "Educators" tab on the Friends of the Lincoln Collection website with their networks. Sarah's work with schools in the 2024 fall semester resulted in presenting to 1,346 in-person attendees for a total number of 1,563 connections. In addition to Sarah's 2024 numbers, the Rolland Center hosted 1,258 students, an increase of 17.9% over 2023.

Our Educational Outreach Coordinator and our Lincoln Librarians added much downloadable content to the newly reorganized "Educators" tab on the Friends of the Lincoln Collection webpage.

Connecting Community

During Family History Month, the Genealogy Center partnered with the Allen County Genealogical Society and residents of the Kensington Blvd. Historic District for a Kensington Walking Tour on October 12, 2024. Nearly seventy individuals participated in the tour, heralded as one of their most successful tours ever. Elizabeth Hodges led the tour, providing participants with a rich blend of historical and architectural information about each property. Using neighborhood residents' own stories, historic maps, deeds, photographs, and census records, the properties were brought to life. The tour was extremely well-received by participants as well as the owners of the homes. There were many great questions asked, positive comments received, and interest in making walking tours an annual event.



Technical Services

Christine Diedrich, Technical Services Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

One way Technical Services connects our patrons to stories is with original cataloging. Last year we created just over 1,400 original records for everything from books and board games to video games. Some of our largest areas for originals were board games (256), adult fiction (290), adult nonfiction (259) and juvenile nonfiction (247). We also saw an increase in originals for the World Language Collection and musical scores. Not only are these records used by our library, but they are available in WorldCat for any other library in the world to use.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

While our department works to add new material to the catalog, we also make corrections and updates to existing material. Last year, updates were made to almost 7,000 items. This includes fixing faded spine labels, updated board game content sheets, call number corrections, new jacket covers and adding items that have fallen out of the catalog. A large part of this number was work done updating call numbers for the World Language Collection and Christian fiction titles. This work helps make our collection more accessible to our patrons.

Leading Through Innovation

Our Acquisitions department closed out our first full budget year on Polaris. The acquisition process has become more streamlined as invoices no longer have to be manually imported and titles are received in Leap when they arrive, not when they are shipped. This allows staff to know the exact date and time a title arrives and can pass that along to patrons who are waiting for a specific title. We can also print slips for a title when it is received that tells us if it has holds, allowing us to catalog and get those titles out first to waiting patrons.

Youth Services

Jacki Fulwood, Youth Services Manager

Celebrating Reading and Learning

We delivered Book Rich Environment (BRE) books to Fort Wayne Housing Authority and Memorial Park Middle School. BRE is a program at the national level that supports literacy opportunities in public housing sites and other qualifying locations.

Connecting Community

We began meeting with partner organizations Fort Wayne Community Schools and Blessings in a Backpack to discuss our plans to continue to address food insecurity in our communities through the return of our summer meal and food distribution sites. Other partners including Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation and the Literacy Alliance plan to bring play and reading to library locations this summer.

Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

In conjunction with the COO and Public Services, we selected furniture and manipulatives to finalize the design for the upcoming Little Turtle and Grabill Storyscape projects.







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