

# Quarterly Managers' Report



Allen County  
Public Library

Q2 2024



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# Our Strategic Goals

## CELEBRATING READING AND LEARNING

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

## LEADING THROUGH INNOVATION

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

## CREATING A CULTURE OF BELONGING

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

## DESIGNING FUNCTIONAL, FRIENDLY SPACES

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

## CONNECTING COMMUNITY

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

# Aboite Branch

Kris Lill, Branch Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

This spring, branch assistant Carissa created a window display to promote the Indiana Early Literacy Firefly Award, a “readers’ choice” award for the youngest library users in Indiana. Ballots were made available next to a collection box as well as a book display with current and former nominees.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

Aboite librarian Mike Baker celebrated his 30th anniversary at ACPL – and the Aboite branch. Mike is well-known for his expert reference skills, his thoughtfully curated DVD and music CD collections, and especially for his kindness and patience when working with patrons. Thank you and congratulations, Mike!

## Connecting Community

Staff at the Aboite branch have devoted a great deal of time and energy promoting and implementing the annual SPARK Summer Program, including visiting schools and community meetings, planning events with ACPL colleagues and local experts, and managing the increase in foot traffic and circulation of materials. It is a team effort, for sure. We welcomed back 4-year veteran Team Read staff Katelyn and onboarded new summer assistant Taya; both have been great additions to the team!

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

The final stage of the roof repair, initiated by the derecho storm in June 2022, has been completed. The branch now boasts a metal roof. This could not have happened without the hard work of ACPL’s maintenance manager, Jake Ullom and his team. We appreciate the patience of patrons during this project.



# Dupont Branch

Erin Warzala, Branch Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

The SPARK summer learning program is in full swing, and patrons have been flocking to the library to attend programs and to collect their summer reading prizes. We had more than 600 people attend our programs in June, and many more used our library to meet with friends, check out books, do a scavenger hunt, etc.! The new format of the summer learning program is working well for us, and, while it's still too early for the official stats, it does seem like we have more adults participating in the reading program this year.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

The redesign for our entry area is ongoing but coming along nicely. The wall that separates the public side from the staff side was installed in early June, and we anticipate that the new book return and flooring will be added soon.



## Connecting Community

In April, we did two outreach storytimes at Salomon Farm Park. This is such a great partnership between the library and the Parks Department, and families love meeting on the farm to hear stories, sing songs, and even take a tractor ride!





# Georgetown Branch

Stephen Platt, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

### INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE COLLECTION

In May 2024, the Georgetown Branch created a space for a growing collection of World Language books for children in the children's area. We have noticed an increase in demand for books in other languages, especially Spanish.

### ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH – MAY 2024

Adult patrons worked together to create Batik style paintings in a creative canvas program. Batik is a method of painting originating from Indonesia.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

### SUMMER LEARNING DECORATIONS

The library was decorated for Summer Learning – the theme was Adventure, Exploration and Travel.



## Creating a Culture of Belonging

### SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMMING OUTREACH

This May our team put together 25 outreach events at 8 school locations to promote the Summer Learning Program, reaching around 2,000 children.

Children's Librarian, Austin Faux reads a story during a children's storytime and is visited by an especially interested young man. Incidentally, this was Austin's first storytime at the Georgetown Branch in his role as our new Children's Librarian.

Children under the ages of 18 fill the meeting room for the free lunch program. In June 2024 alone, around 1,500 children received a free lunch averaging around 75 children per day.

# Georgetown Branch

## Connecting Community

### FREE COMIC BOOK DAY – SATURDAY, MAY 4TH

Patrons of the library were delighted to find a display of Free Comic Books in the rotunda of the library, supplied by Books Comics and Things.

Children’s Librarian Gabe Downs led a storytime in partnership with Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.



## Leading Through Innovation

### VIRTUAL REALITY PROGRAMS

The Georgetown Branch offered several Virtual Reality Programs during this quarter using the library’s new virtual reality equipment: Virtual Reality Fireworks Tour and Virtual Reality World tour.

Patrons of all ages created “Fireworks Paintings” after a virtual reality tour of drone footage of Fireworks. The attendees used the VR equipment and then created explosive works of art resembling fireworks.





# Grabill Branch

Rebecca Wolfe, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

Assistant Manager Adrienne Bogard went through ACPL's first Leadership Cohort, learning much about leadership in general and her own leadership style and goals.

## Connecting Community

Grabill branch youth librarian Jennifer Spoelhof continued the summer tradition of offering storytime in the Leo-Cedarville Town Park. At the park, you have to compete with playground equipment, traffic noise, baseball players, lawn mowers, and car alarms. Jennifer manages to hold their attention! It's a fun program, and it is popular with our community.



# Hessen Cassel Branch

Edith Helbert, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

The new 3D printer on the front desk, part of our Mini Maker Lab, has continued to receive a lot of attention this quarter. Patrons love to watch it print plastic into various shapes, and our Maker Lab programs have been well-attended. In June we held our first Open Hours for the Maker Lab, so patrons can come in to use the various equipment to make items of their own choosing.

Patrons in every age group have participated in a variety of hands-on and self-directed activities throughout the spring quarter. You might remember from past reports that we've been watching the life cycle of a pumpkin since last fall, when we put a Halloween pumpkin in some dirt in a sealed glass cookie jar and began to observe what happened. Patrons returned again and again to write and draw their observations, and a daily record is kept in a 3-ring binder. In early May, the plant had grown strong enough that it was finally ready to move it to a larger container in our outdoor garden space, where it is thriving. The pumpkin plant sprouted in early April with help from youth and the librarian. They prepared soil in containers in mid-May, and the plant blossomed at the end of June.



## Creating a Culture of Belonging

ACPL hires teens each summer to work for the Team Read program, working with elementary-age readers to build literacy skills and social confidence through games and engaging interactions. Several teens helped a new reader at Hessen Cassel choose a new book that they will read together and then the child will be able to keep! The teens visit Hessen Cassel every Friday for the 6 weeks of their summer job.

In response to requests from members of the community for noise-cancelling headphones or a place to step away from the hubbub for a few minutes, staff created a Quiet Room in one of our two study rooms. Available daily from opening until 2:30 when the activity level begins to die down, this room is open to anyone who needs it.

# Hessen Cassel Branch

Many of our patrons have a variety of sensitivities and needs, and in recent trainings by the School Care Team, four of our staff were able to spend 6-8 hours each, learning and practicing social-emotional learning skills. Staff who haven't yet taken the School Care Team sessions will be taking them next quarter, and have taught warning signs for recognizing that someone is overwhelmed by their senses when surrounded by lots of people.

Some of the activities available in the Quiet Room include:

- Drawing, writing, and coloring
- Petting a soft stuffed animal
- Looking at a no-words picture book
- Arranging natural items in a pattern
- Making a scratch art picture
- Playing with a variety of fidget-toys

Lori Wilkin, a full-time ELL teacher from East Allen County Schools, rejoins the Hessen Cassel team for her second year as our LINK Programmer to serve the FWCS lunches and snacks Lori then offers an hour-long program for K-5 students every weekday.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Charkiera also taught our Branch Assistants, Madison Miller and Leslie White, to use the Cricut cutting machine in our new Mini Maker Lab. Staff used the machine to make letters and adventure-themed decorations that connect to the SPARK Summer Learning Program theme, "Adventure Begins At Your Library."

## Connecting Community

Senior Youth Librarian Jennifer FitzSimons visited several daycares, preschools and elementary schools with SPARK Outreach. One of the daycares closest to our branch, New Covenant Academy, recently received a grant to build a new playground, and has invited the library to participate with a "Storytime in the Park" on the day of their grand opening later this year.

Assistant Branch Manager Charkiera Smith, together with Laura Bohnke from Shawnee Branch and Jonathan Frincke from Library at Home, worked with residents monthly at Tall Oaks Apartments through an ongoing collaboration with Fort Wayne Housing Authority. While Laura led a travelling program or wellness opportunity and Jon brought a variety of books to check out, Charkiera offered drop-in technology help on tablets, cell phones, and other devices that the residents brought with them.

## Leading Through Innovation

Branch Manager Edith Helbert and Charkiera rearranged the furniture behind the scenes, in order to open up the staff workroom area. By removing and relocating furniture, they were able to open space so that staff can see one another and collaborate more easily.

While the public doesn't see this area, it makes the staff able to work more efficiently and offer better service to our community.



# Little Turtle Branch

## Deb Noggle, Branch Manager

### Celebrating Reading and Learning

In our monthly adult programs, participants learned beginning embroidery, self-care journaling, and made wreaths from deconstructed books. We also learned how to make soap, design decorative terrariums, and used quill pens with homemade antiqued paper.

Little Turtle has two Dungeons & Dragons programs—one for teens, and one for adults. For kids, we hosted a preschool storytime and a toddler program weekly. In addition to those weekly programs, we offered elementary-aged programs like Lego Challenge, Canvas & Cookies, and Make Art.

In June, we started the Summer Learning Program, and our (Monday-Friday) daily “winning lineup” of Free Lunch followed by an activity or presenter program, then we have Free Snack after the program. I believe that this lineup has increased our numbers this year for both the Free Lunches and our afternoon programs. On Fridays, we hand out Blessings in a Backpack, which is a sealed package of shelf-stable food for kids to eat over the weekend. We are so pleased to be offering these important services at our location.

### Creating a Culture of Belonging

Little Turtle Branch has welcomed three new staff members this quarter! We are pleased to have Kelley Brenneman as our new Assistant Manager, Foster Hickle as our new Branch Assistant, and Erin Goheen as our new Youth Librarian.

During National Library Week in April, our staff was treated to a cuddly visit from two therapy dogs.



# Little Turtle Branch

Little Turtle Staff participated in a team building exercise that included painting individual canvases. Each staff member was given a blank canvas, and asked to paint it with multiple colors in any creative way that they choose. When it was dry, each staff member was given a big letter sticker to put over their painting, and then they were asked to paint the entire canvas black. When the stickers were removed, the name, "LITTLE TURTLE" was revealed.

The symbolism is that we are individuals who bring unique skills and ideas to our team. The uniformity of the black on the canvases binds us together as a team, but the colorful individual letters shows the many unique talents and personalities of our staff.



Little Turtle staff participated in Active Assailant training this quarter, which was an important, powerful training about what to do if an active shooter were to enter our branch. Select staff went to training with Fort Wayne Community Schools to learn how to administer the Free Lunch program in the summer, and all staff did training about the upcoming Summer Learning Program, and how to use and administer the Beanstack software.

## Connecting Community

Little Turtle staff made monthly visits to three daycares, and visited Nebraska Elementary School to provide library materials and an activity for middle school students. In May, we made visits to elementary, middle, and high schools to introduce the upcoming Summer Learning Program. Starting in June, we take our weekly storytime outside during the warmer months, and perform it next to the splash pad at Franklin School Park, just a block away from the library.

We also participate in adult outreach in our community with monthly visits to the North Highlands Senior Apartments, and staff member Malcolm Rodgers leads a popular program called, "Board Games & Brews" for adults at Summit City Brewerks.

In June, we presented a program for Adults on Conservation Gardening presented by the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Little Turtle Branch has been selected to be the next ACPL location to house a brand-new StoryScape! Planning stages have begun, more to come on this exciting new project!



# Monroeville Branch

Chris Wiljer, Branch Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

During the last three months, much of our time has been spent in preparation and implementation of this year's summer learning program, "Adventure Begins at Your Library." Monroeville Branch Staff have created elaborate camping themed decorations, scavenger hunts, story walks and fun surveys which all compliment the program. Three of the more popular programs so far include Mark's Ark, Story Circus with Yasu Ishida and Worm Races. Mark's Ark introduces participants to different animals, "Story Circus" combines magic and origami, and Worm Races is self-explanatory as participants race worms around a track. Other well attended programs include Taylor Swift Trivia, Musical Conexion, What's the Matter? (presented by Science Central) and Pokemon Terrariums. July promises to be equally exciting with highly anticipated programs such as a martial arts demonstration, Chocolate Art in a Box, yoga and dance programs with the Fort Wayne Dance Collective.

## Connecting Community

On June 18, a representative of the "Monroeville American Legion Keith Brown Post 420" auxiliary delivered a check for \$1,000 to the Director of ACPL at the Monroeville Branch for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Once a child registers with the Imagination Library, they can receive one book per month, for free. However, before enrollment can commence, \$100,000 must be raised.

# New Haven Branch

Marie Kaufmann, Branch Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

The New Haven Branch held its first Spring Literary Maze Event at the end of April. This year's theme was Alice in Wonderland. Patrons enjoyed exploring the detailed maze and all of the surprises it offered as an audiobook of the story played in the background over a speaker.

New Haven's Senior Librarian Christian Prater created a Choose Your Own Adventure Scavenger Hunt to match the theme of the Summer Learning Program. It featured 8 different adventure zones where patrons could choose what objects they wanted to use to lead them to their next zone of adventure. For example, if you found yourself in the Doctor Who adventure zone you could choose to ride the Tardis to Hogwarts or the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. Patrons loved the freedom to explore each zone throughout the library and choose their own path to earning a treat.

## Connecting Community

This spring all three of the third grade classes at New Haven Intermediate came for a library visit. While at the library they took a tour of the building, learned about library programming and events and enjoyed a story read by Children's Librarian, Sheila Hoffman. The third-graders were also able to sign up for library cards if they didn't already have one, and everyone was able to check out an item before leaving the branch.



# Pontiac Branch

Deborah Meserve, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

Staff were able to create new, more accessible display spaces for our new youth books, monthly displays and holiday books with the installation of StoryScape in April.

Meisha Donelson visited area schools throughout the month of May to tell students about SPARK and/or drop off materials as well as hosting an ACPL table at Fairfield Elementary's Literacy Night.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

In April we welcomed Hazy Mann as our new Circulation Specialist, and June welcomed Bree Tsuleff as our new Youth Librarian.

Citilink had a table in our vestibule to help kick off free lunches by giving out youth bus passes.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Staff worked hard to get our youth collections curated for our new space surrounding the StoryScape. Now the building flows nicely from children's collections to adult collections.

## Connecting Community

In April, Deborah attended Habitat for Humanity home dedications and taught a Quick Intro to Excel class for two student groups at AMP labs. Meisha went to Weisser Park for Slime Night and Golden Years for senior activities.

Deborah gave a demo of library business sources like A to Z Database at the NIIC's Destination Ideation graduation session, hosted a table at Adams Elementary's Community Showcase, attended a patron's graduation from the ELL program at Anthis, and hosted a table/did a quick SPARK commercial at a BrightPoint Parent Appreciation BBQ.

Joy, Meisha and Deborah, along with Anna from WAY staffed an ACPL table at System of Care's Resource Fair/Family Fun Night, sharing stickers made in our Maker Lab and info about SPARK with over 300 people.

In June, Deborah and Joy met with SCAN's Sarah Gibson who has launched their new Allen County Parent Center; they're looking forward to working together later in the summer.



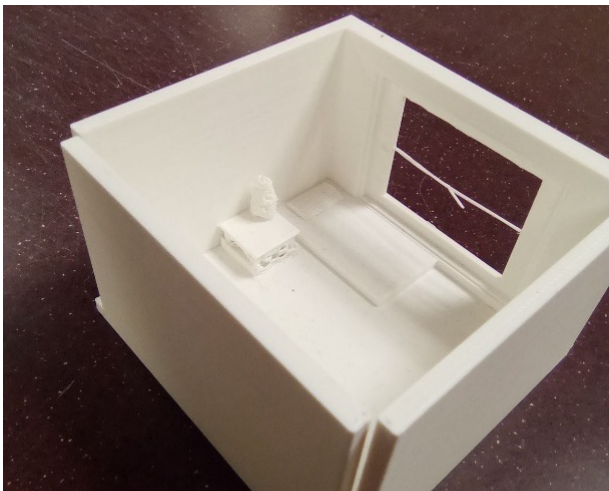
# Shawnee Branch

Edith Helbert, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

Shawnee's Mini Maker Lab opened to the public this spring with classes about 3D printing, computer-aided cutting and heat press, and virtual reality and robotics. In our very first class on March 9, a participant created this tiny model of a bedroom. Learning to create representations of three-dimensional objects on a computer that we can then print and touch jumpstarts design thinking. Through classes and open lab time, people of all ages are able to learn creative problem-solving and persistence.

Rhonda from FWCS Nutrition taught youth about vermiculture while helping them prepare the next heat of worms who will race from the center to the edge of the racetrack. Worm Races is just one of the innovative and engaging programs our children are able to experience, widening their knowledge of the world around us and sparking curiosity.



## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Spring brought much-needed HVAC repairs! In early May, Shawnee branch closed for several days in order to have a new unit delivered to the roof of the building by crane. Staff were assigned to work in other buildings, which had the double benefit of allowing staff to experience working in other departments, reinforcing their own understanding of procedures and daily operations on a systemwide level, as well as offering relief to departments who were experiencing staffing shortages that week.



# Shawnee Branch

## Leading Through Innovation

After many years of service, our old metal bike rack rusted through. Our new, sturdy composite plastic bike rack is a welcome fixture for spring, and seems like it will last for at least a decade or two! This spring, the circulating bike locks were a popular service. Having a bike rack and locks encourages people to bike to the library rather than driving, which improves both community health outcomes and environmental sustainability.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

With the retirement in April of Scott Mertz, Paige Price was promoted from Branch Assistant to Circulation Specialist, and Ebony Bitner moved into the 28-hour Branch Assistant. Katrina Clohessy rejoined Shawnee in a Shelver position which allows Katrina to be home with her young child.

Mary Lybarger also brings years of experience working with children at FWCS. She works closely with our Youth Librarian, Gabi Jauregui, to facilitate engaging programs each weekday.





# Tecumseh Branch

## Deb Noggle, Branch Manager

### Celebrating Reading and Learning

Each month, we have a program for families called Family Fun, where all ages can do activities together inspired by children's books. We learned all about the Eclipse and made DIY pet toys. We offer weekly storytime and toddler programs, but we also participated in the ACPL Chalk Festival for National Library Week, had a blast giving away comics on Free Comic Book Day, and learned about Japanese culture while making Koinobori—carp streamers to celebrate Kodomo no hi (Children's Day) on May 5.

We started the Summer Learning Program on June 1, and our daily routine is BUSY! We offer free lunch, followed by a program/activity, and then free snack, and we often give out 85-90 lunches in one day. We also serve around 100 children with Blessings in a Backpack.

Other programs for youth include science-based programs, teen programs, crafting and more. Adults can continue learning with My Generation and how-to/DIY programs.



### Creating a Culture of Belonging

One new program, Neurodivergent Teen Hangout, attracted 10-12 attendees with a supportive environment for teens to connect with others who understand their experiences and challenges. We provide a low-sensory environment and can accommodate different needs so everyone can feel comfortable. From game nights and crafts to movie nights and book discussions, this program caters to different interests, needs, and abilities.

During National Library Week in April, our staff was treated to a cuddly visit from two therapy dogs, and staff enjoyed dressing up for Spirit Week.

### Connecting Community

Tecumseh staff made monthly visits to Beacon Heights Senior Apartments with crafts, speakers, and technology help. May was a month of school visits and table events. We visited elementary, middle, and high schools to promote the Summer Learning Program. Tecumseh had a table at Forest Park Elementary's Literacy Night and talked to families about the summer learning program and signed people up for library cards.

# Waynedale Branch

Amanda Vance, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

The Waynedale Branch has been working on expanding our self-directed programming for all ages. The community has been enjoying a variety of options available throughout the building. In the Spring, an interactive bulletin board asked kids to write poetry and add it to our "poet tree." Scavenger hunts asked youth to find different Asian foods during Asian American Pacific Islander month. Summer SPARK's theme of "Adventure Begins" has kids creating different birds they might see on a hike and collaborating on a community pixel art mystery picture. In the adult area, many community members enjoy working together to finish a rotation of puzzles.

# Woodburn Branch

Paige Shook, Branch Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

To celebrate National Library Week, we decided to present the second annual “If you give a librarian a...”-themed storytime, since it was so well-received last year. Our participants got to make chef’s hats and table placemats, then whipped up and decorated their own pancakes. Again, this storytime was an immense success: the little chefs are still talking about it today and still want to make more pancakes!



## Connecting Community

In May, the Woodburn branch participated in the city’s Mother’s Day celebration, which provided a day of fun for families. We set up a table, provided Mom-themed crafts for the community, and distributed information about the upcoming Summer Learning Program.

Also in May, we presented at Woodlan Elementary’s Fine Arts Day event. Librarians spent the day talking with over 500 kids (K-6th grade) about the Summer Learning Program and all the different services the Allen County Public Library provides.

At the end of June, we staffed an activity table at TruLand John Deere Kid Day of Play. We had approximately 50 families participate in this agricultural day of fun. Participants made a variety of farm-related crafts, like animal headbands and punny bookmarks.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

The Summer Learning Program is booming at Woodburn. Popular programs like Pokémon Terrariums, Mosaic Art Tiles, and Mark’s Ark reached max registration within a few days of opening! Our participation in programming has continued to grow, hitting and exceeding pre-pandemic levels

But programming hasn’t been the only popular attraction at Woodburn: our decorations are causing quite a stir as well! We interpreted “Adventure Begins at the Library” as an invitation to explore our nation’s National Parks. National Park-themed art covers our bookshelves, windows, bulletin boards, and the Storyscape. Kids enjoyed camping in a (now retired) tent, birdwatching in the Storyscape tree, and making smores while sitting on cushion “logs” at the campfire. They even signed up for the SLP at our dedicated “Ranger Station.”

An enormous thank-you goes out to Helena Emenheiser for bringing her incredible artistic talents to this theme. Her art has brought some of our nation’s most beautiful parks, from Acadia to the Redwoods to the Everglades, to life and nurtured a spirit of adventure and learning in our patrons.

# Access Fort Wayne

## Norm Compton, AFW Manager

### Celebrating Reading and Learning

National Library Week was again supported with AFW's coverage of the Book Bowl on April 13.

We also recorded the 41st annual ACPL Poetry Contest Awards on April 27.

We helped at "A Night At The Library" on May 4 where literacy, community, and fun converged in the Maker Lab.

In preparation for that we 3D printed 250 ACPL bookmarks and handed 100 of those out that night.

The Maker Lab at Main has been offering hands-on learning with 9 programs per month to all ages. In addition, we had 25 tours in May with 335 students, teachers, and parents come through the Lab.

### Creating a Culture of Belonging

On April 20 WELT 95.7 FM did a great outreach event for National Record Store Day. WELT DJ's and volunteers talked to 350 people that day at Wooden Nickel Records handing out buttons and connecting with people.

Through collaboration with Marketing, we made the SPARK summer PSA that has played 1,370 times on our channels in May and June.

### Connecting Community

Content creation and audience connection is what Access Fort Wayne does best. In this quarter, AFW helped patrons make 402 TV programs and 897 radio programs. Our coverage of local government meetings included 59 shows for the City, 36 for the County and 17 for ACPL this quarter.

In June, we kicked off the 18th season of Rock the Plaza with more than 1,000 people in attendance on June 15.

### Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

ACPL celebrated 10 years of Makers Labs this quarter. For a decade, ACPL has allowed people to 3D print items and much more. The ACPL Board of Trustees revised the cost of 3D printing in April, shifting from time to grams effectively cutting the cost in half.

The Maker guides at Main are designing and making things for ACPL. Francisca designed a 3D printed bookmark and has made 500 of them to give away to guests. She also designed a 3D printed carabiner that is being printed at all the Maker Labs across ACPL this Summer. We have 3D printed 360 gold medallions for the Children's department.

# Adult Services

Traci Ward, Adult Services Manager

## INFORMATION SERVICES

### Celebrating Reading and Learning

Nancy Saff, along with other library staff, participated in a Flower Power themed Great Day Café on May 8th. We had 13 participants.

Nancy also attended the AIHS Dementia Stakeholder Summit on May 22nd.

10 teams (11 signed up) for Book Bowl 2024 on April 23. Planned with Anna Kallemeyn and Jacob Schmotzer. Also received day-of support from Adrienne Bogard, Sarah Holmes, George Johnson-Coffey, Lisa Worrell (Friends volunteer), Becky Kumfer; Sasha Perisic for signage; CME, Access Fort Wayne and Events for other support; many staff contributed trivia. Total of 51 attended. Comment cards all indicated the attendees had fun. Winners were Ladies Who Lunch.



### Creating a Culture of Belonging

Steve Miller hosted some great library tours and guests were “wowed by the sheer size and scope of the collection.” One patron in particular, who was new to the building, finished his interaction with Steve stating “actually, I’m pretty impressed with where my tax dollars are going. I’ll be back again.”

Virginia Schmidt created a fun all-ages scavenger hunt for Free Comic Book Day which invited patrons to explore the Readers’ Services department in their quest for clues.

Readers’ Services World Language Collection (WLC) is popular! Books have been requested lately in the following languages: Spanish, Russian, Czech, Arabic, French, Creole, Japanese, Serbian, and Burmese. Readers’ Services’ collection of English as a Second Language (ESL) books has grown in the Spanish section. Multilingual staff members from across the system were asked to help with basic translation of reference interactions.



# Adult Services

## Connecting Community

Through our partnership with the Parkview Homeless Team, we have provided resources to a number of patrons in need. Most recently, Liisa Wiljer assisted a gentleman who had just relocated from Georgia and was living at the Rescue Mission. She was able to get the man in touch with Lisa Graham from the Parkview Homeless Team who provided recommendations for apartment listings and other resources. The man was extremely grateful and remarked that the library was “marvelous.”

## Leading Through Innovation

Sara Perisic attended the Teens Career Fair on Monday, June 6. She, along with several ACPL staff and various professionals from the community, had the opportunity to speak with Team Read volunteers about what it means to work in a public library, what a librarian does, and what it takes to get there. Sara also completed the first-ever ACPL Leadership Cohort with fellow colleagues in Leadership roles around the system.

Nancy Saff, along with others, began testing the SWANK movie and TV show streaming platform.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

Readers’ Services has updated its large entryway display: Slim Pickings, a collection of novellas to encourage patrons to jump back into reading.

Readers’ Services bay displays for the quarter have included a classics theme (I Haven’t Read That Since High School), a comics display to align with Free Comic Book Day (Comic Relief), and History. We continue to have our very popular Staff Picks display, a local author display, and rotating special recognition displays for Juneteenth, Jewish American Heritage Month, and National Poetry Month.

Sara Perisic and Virginia Schmidt have worked hard to create a new set of endcaps for Readers’ Services. Their next endcap projects will take them to Business, Science & Technology and Art, Music & Media.

Readers’ Services also received new shelving and furniture for the department entryway. The orange benches have been a big hit.



# Audio Reading Service

George Johnson-Coffey, Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

The Audio Reading Service broadcasted 50 individual shows utilizing 106 sources. We provided a monthly average of 720 hours of broadcast and 298 programs which enrich the lives of listeners. Some feedback we have received:

“ That radio plays all day! We really appreciate your service.

*Deborah, mother of listener Matthew*

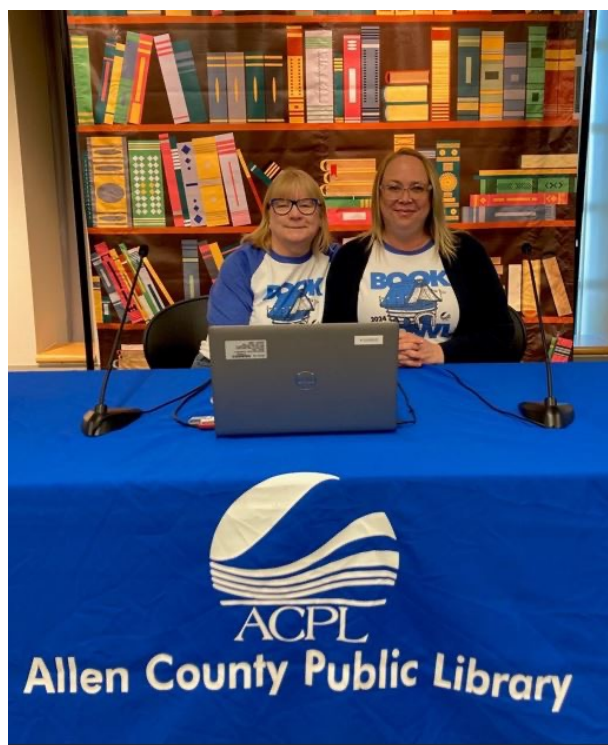
“ I enjoy all the programs I listen too! Thank you for your service!

*Listener Sandy*

On April 13, as a part of National Library Week, George emceed the 2024 Book Bowl with Lisa Worrell, Foundation and Friends Board member.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

In the second quarter of 2024, ACPL received \$15,006.31 in added value through the services of 97 volunteers (FTE=2.60) who gave 1,360 hours of service. We welcomed two new volunteers.



# Audio Reading Service

## Connecting Community

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

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

During the second quarter of 2024, ARS received \$1,689 in financial gifts.

It was a privilege for George to speak at the Towne House Retirement Community's Volunteer Recognition Luncheon on April 10. She shared the stage with Beth Boatright, Dir. of Community Partnerships & Programs, and Jonathon Frincke, Library at Home Supervisor.

At the Jackson R. Lehman Family YMCA's Senior Expo, George shared about ACPL's programs and services directed toward seniors, connecting with 52 people.

On May 9, George gave a presentation to The League's Peer Support Group, connecting with 21 visually impaired-individuals and family members.

The Audio Reading Service leases WBOI's HD-2 channel for our radio broadcast. George and Beth Boatright hosted WBOI's new President and General Manager, Travis Pope, at the ARS studios for a tour and networking on May 10.

George, along with Rebecca Wolfe (Grabill Manager) and Kelsey Kreger (Library at Home Outreach Specialist) staffed the ACPL booth at AWS' Disabilities Expo on May 11. We connected with over 127 people and had 12 new library card sign-ups.

Chad Butterbaugh, Senior Production Assistant, connected with 11 people in sharing about the Audio Reading Service at the Fighting Blindness Foundation's VisionWalk on June 8.

DiSalle was a drop-off location for the Healthier Moms and Babies' Third Annual Community Wide Diaper Drive, June 1- 16.

On June 25, over 115 volunteers and guests attended the Audio Reading Service Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon at the Mirro Center. The event was underwritten by volunteer, Dena Jacquay, who is the Chief Administrative Officer of Parkview Health.



# Children's Services

Rachael King, Department Manager

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

In celebration with the 2024 GermanFest, the Children's Department hosted a German storytime for children, led by the Shawnee Branch's youth librarian Gabi. Nearly 40 people had a delightful time experiencing this unique storytime.

On Thursday, June 20, one of our children's librarians, Melissa, presented a storytime of welcome, community, and togetherness as part of World Refugee Day.

## Connecting Community

Our department was invited to attend Northcrest Elementary School's Knight Around the World event that celebrates the varied backgrounds and heritages of the diverse student population. This event served as the perfect opportunity to highlight one of our newer databases, LOTE4Kids as it provides families in Allen County with over 4000 titles in more than 60 languages as well as games and activities to help readers to develop their language learning skills.

We ended the school year with more than 700 students touring our department and facility in a 30-day period to learn about the many spaces that we offer for the community. One class even capped their visit with a graduation ceremony in our theater.



# Communications, Marketing, & Web

Aja Michael-Keller,  
Director of  
Communications

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

A goal for the dept was to distribute all SPARK materials to branches before May - and we did! Branches received their initial Summer Learning Program "Starter Kit". The kits included bookmarks, reading/activity trackers, banners, yard signs, and more! In addition to in-house printed materials, we supported the program with radio ads, newspaper, a billboard campaign, digital media, and a kiosk at a TinCaps game. These efforts have pushed our number of registered participants over last year's total by 1,500. And we still have 2 weeks remaining! According to Youth Services Manager, Jacki Fulwood, "we are seeing numbers close to where they were pre-covid." This is great news!

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

We opened a new StoryScape area at the Pontiac location, featuring local iconic businesses and people from the southeast community. The design includes words in Spanish, Burmese, and English, fostering a culture of belonging.

## Connecting Community

In April, Marketing launched a brand-new online merchandise store featuring apparel and promotional items like t-shirts, hats, polos, mugs, umbrellas, tumblers, and more. Proceeds from the store go directly to the Friends of the Library, a group that consistently supports programs, projects, and employee development initiatives. We even added Rock the Plaza merchandise to the online store for our concert enthusiasts.

In media relations we enjoyed 714 mentions this quarter for a daily average of 7.99 mentions/day. This equates to a total reach of 204 million views and earned media value of 1.84 million dollars. Top stories included National Library Week, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and Juneteenth activities.

Top keywords across all coverage:



A word cloud of top keywords across all coverage. The most prominent words are "allen county public library" and "community". Other visible words include "young children", "weekend books", "morning dollars", "summer", "event", "children", "police", "afternoon", "activities", "news dot com", "life", "person", "ages", "story", "alive news park", "county city food kids", "area library program news", "heat", "alive morning news", "news dot com".



# Communications

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

In close collaboration with the Friends of the Lincoln Collection, Marketing successfully completed the design and installation of the new Donor Wall located outside of the Rolland Center. The wall was revealed to the public immediately following our Rolland Lecture on Juneteenth. The Rolland Lecture itself was also a well-attended by more than 100 guests after a successful marketing push from our team.

In Social Media, comparing Q2 to Q1, reach is up 54%, and interactions are up 16.9%. Top social media posts include the Imagination Library; Free Lunch at the Library; Rock the Plaza; Story Circus with Yasu Ishida, Magic Story Artist. The SPARK paid digital campaign has helped contribute to the 15,000 + registrations to date. The paid digital campaign for the Rolland Center Lecture: Abraham Lincoln, Juneteenth, & The Power of the Emancipation Proclamation reached 16,877 accounts with 952 interactions, and 179 link clicks. We successfully upgraded and launched the Wix Studio version of the website. The new site is fully responsive and dynamically resizes for every screen size.



# Community Partnerships and Programs

Beth Boatright,  
Director of Community Partnerships and Programs

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

It's been a busy spring and summer at ACPL! Across the county we, offered nearly 1,300 programs in April, May, and June. From storytime and book clubs to Tai Chi and animal showcases, we welcomed more than 25,000 attendees at programs this quarter.

Of particular note was our first annual collaboration with Fort Wayne Youtheatre, who brought their production of *Go, Dog, Go!* To the Main Library's theatre for a week in April. More than 300 attendees enjoyed this early-literacy featured event.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

In June, nearly 300 community members joined us at the Main Library to celebrate World Refugee Day! Refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan shared their stories, we enjoyed a delicious, multiethnic luncheon, and the afternoon was filled with multicultural music, dance, and storytelling in our auditorium. We're grateful for Catholic Charities' partnership for this event, and to the many local sponsors for their underwriting.

## Connecting Community

Spring and Summer are the peak outreach months for ACPL team members. Our librarians visited dozens of schools and connected with thousands of students in April and May to promote our library's summer programming. We've also connected with the community at scores of festivals and events. From Arabfest and Juneteenth to neighborhood block parties, we've been an active presence across the county all quarter.

Our continued collaboration with Fort Wayne Community Schools have brought summer lunches and snacks to kids across eight of our locations throughout the month of June. This year a new collaboration with Blessings in a Backpack is ensuring that kids who might not have stable food sources each weekend can take home a small package of shelf-stable food from our lunch sites on Fridays. These meals and snacks fuel our children so they can read, play, learn, and grow all summer long.

# Events

Leanne Bure, Events Manager

## Connecting Community

The Myanmar Youth Association presented A Taste of Korea in May on the Plaza. They ushered in food vendors, activities, and cultural performances for the community to experience. The Mexican Consulate returned in May to extend document services to over 500 patrons seeking assistance with passports.

May 4 was a special, and BUSY, day at the ACPL. We hosted one a regular quilting group in Alan McMahan room during the day. The Events Team set the stage in the Great Hall for The Literacy Alliance gala, A Night At The Library, while supporting Free Comic Book Day activities. The library glowed after hours with over 200 guests enjoying a behind-the-scenes look with food and beverages.

The Events Team deployed technology to four media events in Q2. We are always eager to take the show on the road as we packed up audio and traveled to PON to set up for their StoryScape Grand Opening. We welcomed the community to highlight the Blessing in Backpack collaboration. We had fun with the Imagination Library campaign launch as we played a message from Dolly Parton on a portable video conferencing cart. We rounded out June aiding the unveiling of the Rolland Center Donor wall too.

	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>Events</b> (non-ACPL)	114	117	134
<b>Attendance</b>	2,300	3,122	3,677

## Leading Through Innovation

The Theater continues to host numerous events that tap technology. From the Fort Wayne Youth Theater production, Go Dog Go, to library puppet shows, we are ready to deploy audio, lights, and action. We rolled out the video conferencing red carpet for the April Indiana Library Federation Regional Conference while they used meeting room space. Events also arranged the Gallery for the ILF Conference to enjoy lunch and connect with colleagues.

# Human Resources

LaRae Bane, Director of Human Resources

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

In April, we celebrated National Library Week! It's an entire week to thank our staff in all positions for the hard work and dedication they give to our community every day. Of course, we had fun, too, celebrating with a spirit week. The next time you visit your home branch, be sure to thank the incredible staff!



## Connecting Community

This spring, we ran our first Leadership Cohort group. These nine individuals, in leadership roles throughout the organization, came together to expand their knowledge around having difficult conversations, emotional intelligence, teambuilding, communication, and bias. We look forward to welcoming our second cohort in the fall of 2024!

In June, we welcomed our first Social Services Coordinator, Cass Winters, to ACPL. Cass is jumping in to create a solid foundation for supporting patrons and staff. We are excited to have him as a part of our team!

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

We wished a 'happy retirement' to Tom Manning (IT Services, 26 years of service), Scott Mertz (Shawnee, 42 years of service), Mary Bearman (Technical Services, 32 years of service) and Stacey Stamas (Adult Services, 35 years of service).

## Leading Through Innovation

The ACPL HR team participated in the Amp Lab career fair at Electric Works. We enjoyed showing students what alternative career paths may bring them through the library. What an impressive group of students!

We participated in the annual SHRM (Society for Human Resources Management) conference in Chicago, along with 26,000 of our HR peers. The goal amongst all participants was to have, collectively, one million civil conversations in our work and personal lives. Now, maybe more than ever, I think we all feel the need for those important conversations.

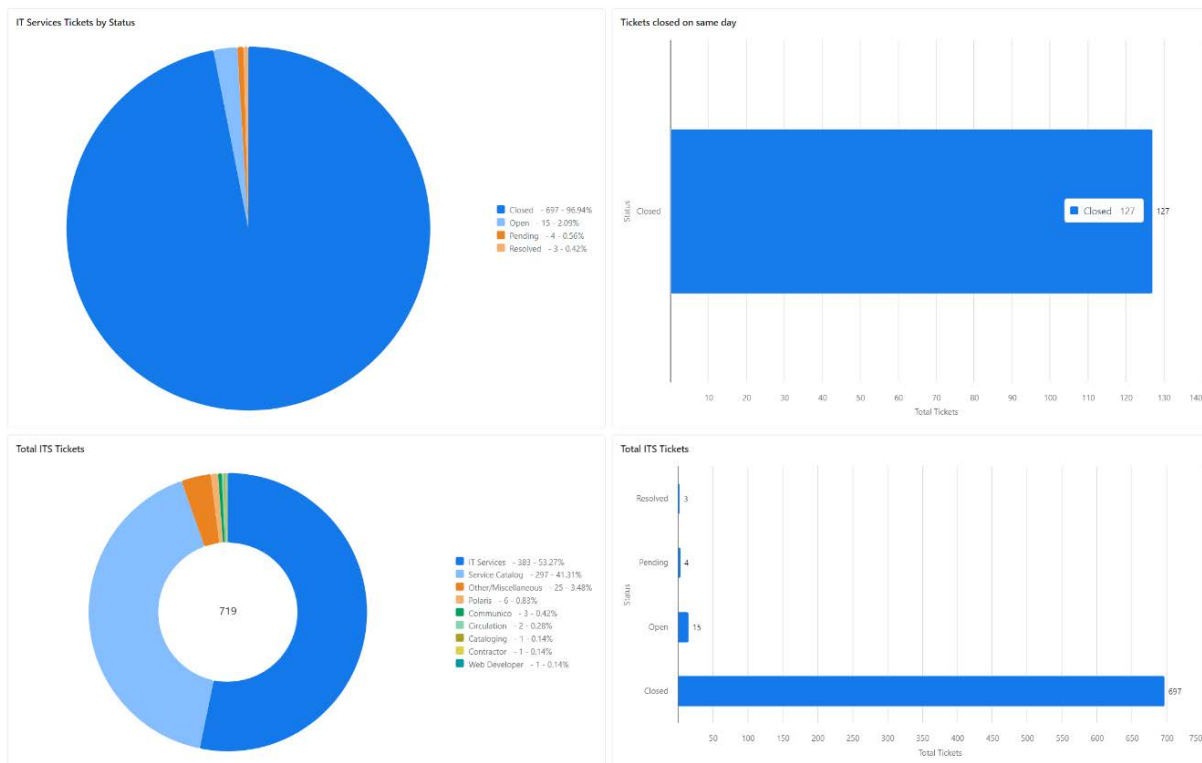
# IT Services

Kevin Wells, IT Services Manager

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

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

Between April 1 and June 30 IT Services resolved or completed 700 of their assigned 719 tickets. 127 of the 700 closed tickets were closed on the same day. Our completion rate for the second quarter of 2024 is 97.4%.



In Q2 we completed our endpoint security migration to Microsoft Defender. As stated in our Q1 report, Microsoft Defender integrates well with all our Microsoft 365 cloud services, with improved Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) compared to our previous security solution. According to AV-Test, an independent research institute for IT Security, Defender has consistently outscored other enterprise antivirus solutions with 100% protection against zero-day web and email malware attacks.

In addition to the KnowBe4 Security Awareness training, we are preparing to deploy CrowdStrike in Q3. Along with EDR, CrowdStrike provides Managed Detection and Response, a 24/7 cyberthreat monitoring service with cybersecurity experts on standby to provide rapid incident response if needed. We are able to take advantage of these services, at no cost, through our partnership with the Indiana Office of Technology and the State and Local Government Cybersecurity Grant Program.



# IT Services

## Leading Through Innovation

E-Rate funding was approved for 2024-2025. The approved funding provides a 90% discount for our WAN and Internet Service. We are also adding a second Internet connection to the Main library. This second connection will help offset our additional bandwidth needs and is available as a dedicated link to restore critical services in our disaster recovery plan. Funding also includes an 85% discount toward the replacement of the aging UPSs that support the switches in all our technology closets and updated wire management hardware.

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# Library At Home

Jon Frincke, Supervisor

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

As of this quarter, eight of LAH's partner facilities now receive books for their club meetings. Shawnee's Laura Bohnke is leading a group at Lutheran Life Villages on South Anthony.

The addition of Kelsey Kreger to our team gave us the opportunity to grow. Peg Heinze and Kelsey begin their collaborative programming work in July, with a trip to the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo.

Jon helped one patron research an heirloom sword. Jon discovered that it is Masonic, was forged over a hundred years ago near the patron's childhood home, and belonged to the patron's grandfather (his name is engraved on the blade). The information came just in time for her family reunion, where the sword was the topic of much discussion.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

Library at Home is still seeing dozens of new patrons every quarter who need our service. To tell each new patron more about us, we now offer a welcome folder that includes an orientation sheet, a fridge magnet displaying their delivery date, a magnifying card, contact information, and more. We've also added a facility to our schedule, expanding our presence in a part of the county that has been generally underserved.

## Connecting Community

On May 11, Kelsey joined George from the Audio Reading Service, and Rebecca from Grabill, for the annual Disabilities Expo, held this year at the Coliseum. They spoke with more than one hundred attendees, and signed 12 up for library cards.

Our team is better together! At Heritage Pointe of Fort Wayne, we now offer our slide-show program and pop-up library, together, at one convenient time and location. We know that these two separate crowds will cross-pollinate, leading to more engagement with each type of service.

## Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

As more patrons sign up for LAH service, we need more shelf space to accommodate their requests. We recently rearranged our office space to give us 50% more room for our patron and facility holds.

## Leading Through Innovation

Return of the map! Our big map has become more essential lately, and we're happy to give it a new lease on life, and to display it more prominently. Anyone who visits us can now see, at a glance, and also in detail, where Library at Home goes, and what we do.

# Special Collections

Curt Witcher, Director of Special Collections

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

The Genealogy Center's consultative reference model enables patrons to better uncover and marvel at their families' stories, discovered in the Center's rich resources and with the assistance of expert staff. Recently a patron of the Center was having significant challenges tracing her grandmother's Romanian heritage. While not the most frequently encountered family history challenge, two colleagues collaborated to trace her ancestors back to the small village of Vințu de Jos, Transylvania. She was so happy! She mentioned that that particular day was her birthday, and to treat herself she had made a list of things she had always wanted to do but had never done. A family history consultation in the Genealogy Center was at the top of her list. She concluded smilingly saying a successful consultation was a fantastic birthday gift!

And these stories abound. An African American gentleman (early 40s) and his son (early 20s) were very interested in tracing the family history though neither one of them knew where to begin. They were hoping to trace their family back to slavery times. Not an easy research path, a Genealogy Center librarian began exploring vital records with them, and one could see their eyes grow big as the father's grandmother was discovered in a census. This showcased the family's move from Mississippi to Allen County, Indiana during the Great Migration.

The father's grandmother is still alive (being about 90 years young), so he grabbed his phone and called her while the consultation was continuing. With her help, they were able to confirm many details of their family, including the fact that her father had often gone by a nickname that was reflected on the census document. By the time the consultation was over, they had traced the family back to a small farm in 1866 Alabama. One could tell that they were enthusiastic about continuing the search in the future and believe they now had the tools to continue their journey.

The temporary exhibit cases in the Rolland Center highlighted Mental Health Awareness Month in May with "Mary Lincoln and Mental Health" and Juneteenth in June with the "Emancipation and Freedom" cases respectively.



Numerous Rolland Center patrons commented on how wonderful it was to see mental health addressed in a historic and informative way and visitors in the early part of the month returned later with family and friends. Items highlighted in this exhibit were from the Lincoln Family Album including the Spirit Photograph, the letter of conservatorship for Mary Todd Lincoln, and a typescript about Mary Todd Lincoln's treatment.

# Special Collections

Juneteenth commemorative activities were picked up in the media—WFFT interviewed Abbie Meek on the importance of Juneteenth and the items highlighted in the exhibit. A large group of students (89) visited from East Allen County Schools' Prince Chapman Academy.

On May 4, our first "Lincoln at the Library" program for 2024 took place and was generously sponsored by the Friends of the Allen County Public Library. It featured Daniel Weinberg, noted Lincoln scholar and collector. His presentation was entitled, "Lincoln at the Library: Artifacts Tell Their Stories." Weinberg discussed the importance of Lincoln artifacts and highlighted some items from both his bookshop and the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection at ACPL. In addition to local and social media outlets, news of the program appeared the Indiana State Library's "Wednesday Word" and the Indiana Historical Society's "Communique Online."

On May 4, the Friends of the Allen County Public Library and The Literacy Alliance sponsored "A Night At The Library!" More than two hundred individuals enjoyed Special Collections after-hours tours of the Genealogy Center, the Fine Books Room, and the Rolland Center.

The Friends of the Lincoln Collection brought Dr. Jonathan White, Professor of American Studies, Senior Fellow, Center for American Studies, Christopher Newport University to Fort Wayne to celebrate Juneteenth with us. Dr. White presented a storytime at the Grabill Branch about Abraham Lincoln's young life growing up in Indiana. Later that afternoon, he presented the 2024 annual Rolland Lecture, "Abraham Lincoln, Juneteenth, and the Power of the Emancipation Proclamation." 107 individuals attended in-person in the Main Library theater with an additional twenty-nine joining virtually. Following the program, Todd Stephenson and Curt Witcher gave dedicatory remarks at the unveiling of the new Rolland Center donor wall, and the Friends of the Lincoln Collection sponsored a reception in honor of the donors.



At the end of June, Sarah Schoolman accepted the position of Educational Outreach Coordinator position in the Rolland Center for Lincoln Research that was made possible through funding from the Doermer Family Foundation, the Lincoln Financial Foundation, and the Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana. Sarah comes to our library from Fort Wayne Community Schools where she was a curriculum writer, fifth-grade classroom teacher, and fifth-grade team lead. She also brings experience evaluating and implementing curricula, coordinating technology for groups of educators, and creating meaningful content for middle schoolers. Sarah's position will assist in meeting our goals of more student and educator engagement as well as getting more eyes on this remarkable collection.

Also in June, through the use of gift fund money, the Genealogy Center welcomed Beth Behrendt to a one-year encoder position with the Center's Periodical Source Index team.

# Special Collections

Beth's work will concentrate on indexing some of our ethnic titles as well as niche and specialty publications. The Periodical Source Index is the largest subject index to genealogical and historical periodicals in the world. With more than 3.1 million subject entries, the index was searched over 142,000 times just in the first six months of 2024.



## Connecting Community

The Indiana Genealogical Society (IGS) held its two-day 35th anniversary conference at the Main Library April 19-20, 2024. More than one hundred individuals attended each day. Twenty librarians attended the IGS conference, collectively earning 145 LEUs. Attendees learned from Indiana State Library and Indiana Archives and Records Administration specialists as well as other experts in the field.

At this IGS conference, Genealogy Services Manager Allison Singleton was installed at the new IGS president. Also at this event, it was announced that Elizabeth Hodges, senior Genealogy librarian, was elected to a two-year term as IGS Corresponding Secretary and Curt Witcher received the society's distinguished service award for thirty-five years of continuous service to the IGS.

The President of GermanFest, Eric Nau, reached out to the Genealogy Center, requesting our participation in the Culture Tent for GermanFest 2024, held June 5-9. We committed 53 hours of staffing across the entire event. We brought a library computer with a hotspot, various visuals including a list of German surnames translated into English, cultural history tidbits, 1865 historic maps, flags of the German states, printed materials, and ACPL giveaways. We answered 839 questions and interacted with an additional 556 attendees, making it a successful outreach program for the Genealogy Center.



# Technical Services

Christine Diedrich, Technical Services Manager

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

Starting in June, we changed how we catalog our World Language Collection with the goal of making it more accessible to patrons. The World Language Collection includes bilingual and foreign language material for all age groups. We now use a three-letter code at the beginning of the call number to indicate the language of the item. The previously used single letter code was often confusing to patrons, especially in our Japanese collection. The J added to those call numbers was often confused with the J we add to our juvenile material. We have started using the three letter codes when cataloging new material, and are working our way through the almost 10,000 items in the World Language Collection that will need updated. We will also be updating the call numbers for all of our foreign language films.

## Leading Through Innovation

Our latest Polaris upgrade brought big changes to the Technical Services workflow. The MARC editor that we use to make changes and additions to MARC records within our system had a complete redesign. Now, we can edit directly in the record instead of having to open up each line individually to make changes. We also benefited from an upgrade to bulk changes which cut out several steps for editing items. Being able to access these changes in our test system before the upgrade allowed the department to plan and prepare. The upgrade itself was smooth and has helped us become more efficient in getting material cataloged and out to our patrons.

## Connecting Community

In April, Allen County Public Library hosted a Regional Conference for the Indiana Library Federation. Our department was able to send four people to this one-day event. We attended sessions on book challenges, implicit bias, de-escalation and much more. I, along with two others from ACPL, gave a presentation on our board game and puzzle collections. This covered how they are selected, processed, cataloged and used for programming. This conference offered a chance to hear about the successes of area libraries and explore how we can support each other.

# Teens

## Mari Hardacre, Teens Department Manager

### Celebrating Reading and Learning

Charlotte Hinniger created several well-received programs for the library's Asian Pacific American Heritage Month slate: Art in the Style of Pacita Abad, Henna-Inspired Artwork, Koinobori, and a delightful dumpling-themed scavenger hunt.

Teens staff provided several programs for the summer learning slate including Chocolate Art by Cathy Lambert and Henna Art by Charlotte Hinniger.

### Designing Functional, Friendly Spaces

We rearranged the Teens department to move video gaming equipment out of the lounge. The gaming station now utilizes a large projection screen in the main area, while the lounge has become a favorite space for those looking to study quietly.

We added a rainbow photo backdrop/selfie station for Pride month. It's been so popular that we plan to keep it through summer.

Our summer decorations on the theme of adventure feature colorful birds and foliage.



Dungeons & Dragons, led by Jennifer Gerardot and Alan Bengs, continued to thrive with 20 or more teens in attendance each week.

Our team helped promote the summer learning program, SPARK, at numerous locations around the community. We kicked off SPARK with DJ Too Quick (Adrian Allan) at The Center for Academic Success at Nebraska and Allen County Juvenile Center. Adrian not only shared music but spoke about his educational and career path that led up to the creation of his DJ business.

### Creating a Culture of Belonging

This year's Pridepalooza party for LGBTQ+ teens, and their families and allies, was a success with approximately 60 people in attendance for crafting, snacks, music by DJ SheCutIt, and karaoke. Representatives from The Brave Alliance, Free Mom Hugs, and The Center for Nonviolence shared information about their resources at the event.

Staff from Teens met community members and had fun representing the library at the annual Arab Fest at Headwaters Park.

# Teens

## Connecting Community

We once again hosted an anime drawing contest in conjunction with the Fort Wayne Cherry Blossom Festival. More than 120 entries were received and the artwork of a local teen artist, Johan, was selected to be featured on next year's poster.

With the assistance of Joe Wilhelm of the Indiana Esports Network, we hosted our first interlibrary video gaming tournament. Teens from Georgetown, Tecumseh, Shawnee, and Main Library competed. Matthew Campos, representing Team Main Library, took first place and secured the trophy for Main.

## Leading Through Innovation

Librarian Charlotte Hinniger completed her term as a member of the American Library Association's 2024 class of emerging leaders at the association's annual conference in San Diego. Charlotte also presented a summary of the findings of her master's research project on ACPL's Team Read teen employment program to the ACPL Board of Trustees.



# Youth Services

Jacki Fulwood, Youth Services Manager

## Celebrating Reading and Learning

ACPL's 2024 Team Read season began June 3. Our Team Read teen employees have been hard at work reading and engaging with young children at childcare sites around Fort Wayne as well as in our branches. Team Read visited 21 childcare sites per week in June 2024 for a total of 2,245 reading/interaction sessions with children at the sites. The Team Read program also provides teen employees with training and resources to help them build their skills in the work environment. For example, this year's Speed Career Fair allowed teens to talk with professionals in the fields of teaching, culinary/small business management, nursing, writing, computer science, performing arts, and librarianship.

Summer SPARK 2024 has seen strong participation, with well over 15,000 participants of all ages registering for the program. Early patron surveys show strong positive feedback about this year's changes to the reading and learning program.

## Creating a Culture of Belonging

ACPL kicked off our partnership with Blessings in a Backpack this summer, which allows us to distribute food packs to children for the weekend as a supplement to our weekday LINK free lunch program. Staff at our eight pilot locations distributed an average of approximately 560 food packs each week in the month of June. Meanwhile, the LINK lunch sites serve an average of more than 50 youth every weekday, with some locations seeing more than 100 children in a single session.









**Allen County Public Library**

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