

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 18, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at the Central Library and remotely pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Kimberly Johnson, Chair
Carima El-Behairy, Vice Chair
Joel Moore, Esq., Secretary
Alan J. Bedenko, Esq., Treasurer
Michael Amodeo, Esq.
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq.
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS
Lucy A. Candelario
Frank Gist
Theodore K. Johnson
Elaine M. Panty
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

Chair Kimberly Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. There were no changes to the proposed agenda.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of April 20, 2023. Trustee Panty noted that news outlet WIVB is listed as Channel 7 when it is actually Channel 4. The minutes will be amended. Trustee Michael Amodeo moved, Trustee Panty made a second, and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

Trustee T. Johnson joined the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair K. Johnson communicated she will start planning a talent showcase at the Central Library. She hopes to connect with some of the students we receive at the Central Library on a regular basis. Chair Johnson will also be meeting with the Peacemakers. She also asked if anyone would like to help with the talent showcase to let her know. Chair K. Johnson communicated she attended the *5/14 Remembrance Weekend of Reflection, Healing & Hope* event at Johnnie B. Wiley Sports Pavillion on May 13. Chair Johnson commended the staff involved, specifically Assistant Deputy Directors Samantha Purpora, Joy Testa Cinquino, and Dorinda

Darden and Library Assistant Miranda Pawlak from the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. Chair K. Johnson reported the event was well attended and people were receptive to the Library's presence. She went on to remind the Board of Trustees of the ACT Workshop taking place at the Central Library on May 20 and encouraged attendance.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on May 11, 2023. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee El-Behairy explained she was not in attendance for the Executive Committee meeting but briefly summarized the meeting. Trustee Bedenko moved to have the written report entered into the Minutes, Trustee Panty made a second, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson and members Lucy Candelario, Elaine Panty, and Christopher Sasiadek. Also present were Director John Spears, Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone, Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Doyle, Process Improvement Manager Erin Vest and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich.

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:01 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

The Executive Committee reviewed the proposed agenda for the May 18, 2023 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting.

For her report, Chair Johnson began by welcoming Caitlin Goodrich as the new Assistant to the Director. Chair Johnson stated she was interested in starting a talent showcase this year after doing book reviews last year. She stated because of the increase in teens in the library space, she felt it would be an appropriate idea to solicit them for the showcase. The talent showcase would include spoken word poetry, a fashion show, musical talent, and more. Chair Johnson stated she would want to hold the event before the weather breaks, potentially before school begins. Discussion ensued on the logistics of preparing for such an event. Chair Johnson also announced that this weekend is the anniversary of the Tops tragedy on May 14, 2022. The *Buffalo 5/14 Survivors Fund* steering committee that Chair Johnson was on is receiving the Dean's Honor medal at University at Buffalo on May 21, 2023 and she will be in attendance. Chair Johnson will also be doing events with Mark Talley. Discussion ensued. Director John Spears stated the Library will have a presence on Jefferson Ave. this weekend. Chair Johnson wanted to thank the staff at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. Chair Johnson highlighted Branch Manager Joshua Mitch, Library Assistant Miranda Pawlak, and retired Security Guard Tony Bolden.

CFO Stone reviewed budget & finance items. He noted when the Erie County Legislature closed out the 2022 budget, they designated some of the surplus balance to

a wide range of activities, programs, and purchases. CFO Stone wanted to highlight elements that did not make the news. Legislator John Mills sponsored \$2,000 each for the libraries in his district, which include Angola Public Library, Boston Free Library, Town of Collins Public Library, Concord Public Library, Eden Library, North Collins Public Library, and Orchard Park Public Library. CFO Stone also stated because of the ongoing teen situation at the Central Library, Erie County has appropriated a total of \$755,976 in funding, which has already been transferred to the library system fund and is available. This would fund the Peacemaker services through the end of the school year, \$115,000 to help recreate the teens 'and kids' space, \$70,000 for additional Chromebooks and hotspots, and \$510,976 for security screening equipment for the Central Library. COO Doyle described how they would proceed with the installation of security equipment. Discussion ensued. COO Doyle stated it would take conservatively eight weeks for installation once the order is placed. Chair Johnson asked where the security screening equipment will be placed. COO Doyle explained there will be a dual lane at the Washington St. and Ellicott St. entrance and a single one at the Auditorium. As an aside, Trustee Candelario mentioned the employee door at Oak St. needs to be repaired. CFO Stone said Maintenance is aware and looking into solutions, such as higher strength closures.

Chair Johnson asked about Resolution 2023-16 and whether we are replacing the existing Chromebooks and hotspots or adding new ones. Director Spears stated they are doing both. COO Doyle explained that with the pilot program there were three Chromebook and hotspot kits (included one Chromebook and one hotspot) at each location. However, based on usage it appeared the hotspots were in higher demand. Therefore, each location will be receiving additional equipment at a ratio of three individual hotspots to one Chromebook/hotspot kit. Chair Johnson asked about the Peacemakers being funded to the end of the school year and asked about funding at least some of them for the summer. Director Spears said the Library would have to provide any additional funding. CFO Stone stated this was an emergency procurement, and the contract with the Peacemakers only goes until the end of the school year. He said they will reassess the need, since the teen population drops off dramatically in summer due to a variety of reasons. Discussion ensued. Chair Johnson stated with the teen space, the library should consider having two or three Peacemakers on site. COO Doyle stated the teen space would not be ready until the end of 2023. Discussion ensued about the security screening equipment and how originally only one year was to be funded by Erie County, but now the security screening equipment is being funded for the entire 4-year contract.

Trustee Candelario asked about programming for the teens. Director Spears explained that with the reorganization of the System, there is going to be the creation of a dedicated Young Adult staff. Director Spears stated the library does a surprising amount of teen programming that is popular. Director Spears highlighted Crafting at Central, Librarian Kuniko Simon's Teen Anime/Manga Club program, and the Teen Advisory Group. Trustee Panty asked if current staff would become part of the Young Adult staff or if the Library would pursue staff from outside the organization. Director Spears said the Young Adult team would consist of current staff members. Director Spears also stated part of the Peacemakers' contract is teen programming. Trustee

Panty asked about contracting the Peacemakers again in September. Director Spears stated they need to issue a Request for Proposal. Discussion ensued about the history of the Peacemakers and the Library. Director Spears stated the Buffalo Public Schools offered an opportunity go into the schools and speak with the students. Trustee Candelario asked if the Library would also be visiting charter schools; Director Spears said they can try. Director Spears also stated the Library has a teen survey, and they are collecting information about what teens want. He stated so far, teens want a Tik Tok room. Director Spears also noted the library needs to review the Photography and Filming Guidelines & Approval Form.

CFO Stone stated the Monthly Financial Report contains three months' worth of data. He said the big takeaway is that there should be money for the Peacemakers, since the utilities rates have crashed, and therefore the library has saved money.

For his report, Director Spears asked the Executive Committee what they would like to hear in the "Report of the Director." Chair Johnson asked Director Spears to recap his year at the Library. Trustee Panty asked about Director Spears' relationship with member libraries. Discussion ensued. Director Spears stated there has been a positive relationship with member libraries and their boards.

While going through the agenda for the Board Meeting scheduled May 18, Chair Johnson stated that she wasn't sure if there would be a Report of the Foundation. The ACT Workshop is set to take place on Saturday, May 20 from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM at the Central Library. Chair Johnson moved onto Public Comment. Director Spears stated that a written response will be sent to the speaker at last month's board meeting. Trustee Panty mentioned another patron that attended a previous meeting. Director Spears stated that patron was satisfied with the Library's response to his concerns. There was nothing to add under Unfinished Business. Director Spears stated that he will be out of the country from the end of May to the beginning of June.

Director Spears remarked the Library received an official challenge of a book, and he will be responding. Director Spears noted if they disagree with his response, then it will be appealed to the board. Chair Johnson asked the name of the book. Director Spears stated it is *You Know, Sex*, which is a book for children ages 10 and up that touches on everything about sexuality. Trustee Panty mentioned a group of teens that organized in Orchard Park against book bans. Discussion ensued. Director Spears said he would discuss this with the Administrative Team. Further discussion ensued about book bans.

There being no further business, Trustee Panty motioned to adjourn, and Trustee Sasiadek seconded. The meeting ended at 4:43 PM.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Amend 2023 Budget: Erie County Legislature Member Grant-In Aid. Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone explained Resolution 2023-15 as presented. Trustee Gist motioned for approval, Trustee Bedenko seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-15

WHEREAS, at their April 27, 2023 meeting, the Erie County Legislature approved \$14,000 in available 2022 surplus funds to be allocated in 2023 for grants-in-aid sponsored by Erie County Legislator John Mills, and

WHEREAS, the allocation provides \$2,000 each to the Angola, Boston, Collins, Concord, Eden, North Collins, and Orchard Park libraries, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the award of \$14,000 in County Legislator Member Aid, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL approves the following amendment to the 2023 Operating Budget, increasing revenues and expenses as follows:

2023 Operating Budget Revenue and Expense Increase	Cost Center	SAP Commitment Item #	
		Revenue #466000 Misc. Receipts Amount	Expense #516010 Contractual Payments Amount
Libraries			
Angola Public Library	4204015	\$2,000	\$2,000
Boston Free Library	4204020	\$2,000	\$2,000
Town of Collins Public Library	4204030	\$2,000	\$2,000
Hulbert Library of the Town of Concord	4204035	\$2,000	\$2,000
Eden Library	4204040	\$2,000	\$2,000
North Collins Public Library	4204070	\$2,000	\$2,000
Orchard Park Public Library	4204075	<u>\$2,000</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>
	Total	\$14,000	\$14,000

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes the above contracting member libraries to retain these funds until such time as they can be used for purposes consistent with any sponsor designation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above library is authorized to transfer these funds to other expense accounts within their budget based upon the final determined use, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution and a revised Exhibit A be transmitted to the above cited contracting libraries.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Amend 2023 Budget: Erie County Supplemental Funding for Central Library & Hotspots/Chromebooks. CFO Stone explained Resolution 2023-16 as presented. He explained the following is an allocation of 2022 surplus County funds to assist the Library in handling a number of situations at the Central Library, such as funding the Peacemakers services until the end of the school year, moving and renovating the Teen/Kids’ Spaces, Library Chromebooks & hotspots, and security screening equipment. Trustee Gist asked what the new Kids’ Space will consist of and where is it going. Director Spears explained the planned move of the Kids’ Space from the front of the Central Library near Washington St. to the Media Room where it used to be years ago. He went on to explain the Teen Space will be created in the area where the Kids’ Space is now. Discussion ensued. Trustee T. Johnson asked if the teens will be getting a TikTok room. Director Spears stated they will. Discussion ensued about the benefits of a TikTok room and various programming. Trustee Bucki asked where the items in the Media Room will be moving to. Director Spears gave an overview of the planned move. Trustee Moore suggested a tour when the move is underway. Director Spears showed his appreciation for Erie County and how this funding will be incredibly beneficial to the Central Library. Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee Gist seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-16

WHEREAS, at their April 27, 2023 meeting, the Erie County Legislature approved \$755,976 in available 2022 surplus county funds to support security and programming improvements at the Central Library as well as expand the Library System’s hotspot/Chromebook lending program, and

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the allocation of \$755,916, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL approves the following amendment to the 2023 Operating Budget, increasing revenues and expenses as follows:

2023 Operating Budget

Revenue and Expense Increase

Revenue	SAP #	Amount
Misc. Receipts	466000	\$755,976
Expense		

Peacemakers services	516020	\$60,000
Teen/Kids Space	516020	\$115,000
Library Chromebooks & hotspots	561410	\$70,000
Security screening equipment	561410	<u>\$510,976</u>
Total Expense		\$755,976

and be it finally,

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

Agenda Item E.2.c – Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the year as of March 31, 2023 month-end close was included in the Board packet as an information item. CFO Stone explained Erie County does not issue monthly financial reports until March because they do not close the first two months of the year. CFO Stone therefore noted this is the first report of 2023. He noted utility rates have dropped significantly and he will continue to monitor them.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears announced a potential hold the date for Thursday, July 20 for CFO Ken Stone’s retirement party. Director Spears then asked if CFO Stone would like to comment. CFO Stone briefly summarized his passion for the Library and his involvement in the System as a whole. He stated his last day is Wednesday, August 2. Chair K. Johnson thanked him for his service.

At the Executive Committee meeting on May 11, Director Spears was asked by Chair Johnson to provide a recap of his first year at the Library. Spears started by acknowledging that usually any time a Director says they did something, it was probably their staff that did it, and the Library has an incredible staff. He also wanted to recognize the fact that this past year for Buffalo was not a normal year due to the two devastating storms which led to over 50 deaths and the May 14 tragedy. Director Spears also explained the Central Library experienced events in the past year unlike anything the Library has experienced before, such as the influx of teens and various incidents.

Director Spears detailed his first year at the Library. He stated he started off by attending all 22 of the member libraries’ board meetings, usually with Chair K. Johnson and Vice Chair El-Behairy, to understand the System and how each library serves their community. Some of these libraries such as Amherst, Lackawanna, Hamburg have called upon him to return for advice, trainings, and events. He also pointed out that he worked with the Association of Contracting Library Trustees by providing trainings and will be doing a training at the ACT Workshop at the Central Library on May 20. He went on to explain that he shadowed each department at the Central Library to understand their procedures and how they operated as whole within the Library.

Director Spears also mentioned how he took the time to understand the intricacies of the civil service system and the four unions that the Library works with.

When it comes to the community, Director Spears established the Library as a member of what is called the Cultural Collaborative, a group that includes the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Burchfield Penney Art Center, Buffalo Science Museum, Buffalo History Museum, Buffalo Zoo, Darwin Martin House, Explore & More, Buffalo Philharmonic, Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and Shea's Performing Arts Center. The Library is doing a partnership with the Buffalo Science Museum that will consist of doing outreach to the communities in Buffalo that don't necessarily feel connected to some of the cultural institutions. Director Spears also stated he is a member of the Western New York Digital Equity Coalition, which is the group that is looking at the digital divide throughout Western New York and is trying to take a collaborative, holistic approach to bridging that divide. Finally, Director Spears communicated he spent a lot of time attending events in Buffalo to get to know the community and have his presence known. He stated the community is diverse and there is much to learn.

When it comes to the broader community, Director Spears stated he is a member of the Western New York Library Resources Council Board of Trustees and serves on their Strategic Planning Committee. On the State level, Spears stated he is a representative on the New York Library Association Legislative Committee and went on to detail how he is involved. He announced the Central Library will be hosting the Public Library Systems Directors Organization Conference this year, which is a first for Buffalo. On the national level, Director Spears explained he was recently appointed to the American Library Association's Committee on Professional Ethics and will be one of the two editors of the upcoming edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. He is also involved with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

In regards to higher education, Director Spears has formed a great relationship with Evviva Lajoie, Vice Provost for University Libraries at University at Buffalo and Charles Lyons, Director of E.H. Butler Library at Buffalo State University. He noted they try to meet once a month to provide updates on their institutions. He also explained his relationship with Erie County Community College and said they have resumed conversations about how each institution can benefit each other. There has been no further conversation regarding moving the ECC Library collection to the Central Library, but there have been conversations regarding tabling and providing library cards to ECC students.

Director Spears outlined that he has met with many local and state elected officials, both one-on-one and through legislative meetings with others in Buffalo and in Albany. On a local level, Director Spears stated thanks to CFO Stone, he has been able to familiarize himself with the budget process that is used by Erie County and the capital projects processes for both Buffalo and Erie County.

Director Spears commended ADD Testa Cinquino for the amount of media opportunities she provided him within the past year. He stated he has participated in well over 40 media interviews covering a wide range of issues surrounding the Library, including the teens issue and security screening equipment, as well as broader topics, such as all the wonderful things happening at the Central Library. Director Spears went on to mention these positive media experiences have led to connections with reporters like Sandra Tan from the Buffalo News. He explained how the Library ended up assisting with preserving Buffalo News documents alongside WNYLRC, Buffalo History Museum, and Buffalo State University because of these formed relationships.

Director Spears recapped how the Library handled its response to the two devastating storms in the winter and how the staff and Board were kept informed throughout the entirety of it. He also acknowledged the Library's response to the disastrous May 14 tragedy and how exemplarily the Frank E. Merriweather Jr. Branch Library's staff handled it, specifically Branch Manager Joshua Mitch and Library Assistant Miranda Pawlak and many administrators, such as ADD Purpora, ADD Testa Cinquino, and Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Doyle. The Library's response has transitioned into the work that is being done within the community to make sure the story that is told around the May 14 tragedy is told by the community that it affected and not by others. This led to a partnership with the Buffalo History Museum on the *5/14 Community Collecting Initiative* which now includes the Burchfield Penney Art Center, Buffalo State University, and some of the victims' families.

Finally, Director Spears explained the teen issue that has been ongoing at the Central Library and how it has led to positive outcomes. He highlighted that the ongoing teen issue has led to a clarification and improvement in the relationship with the Sheriff's Office, discussions with the Buffalo Public Schools, and the realization the Library is serving a different community than it was five years ago.

Director Spears ended his recap of the past year with a few observations. He stated the Library needs to rebuild the support staff, such as Human Resources, Business Office, and Development & Communications; he emphasized that these departments do an incredible job, however, they need more support. He went on to detail conversations he had with staff in different departments. Director Spears explained the staff operates out of scarcity and fear from past layoffs, and he hopes to overcome these feelings. He emphasized there is a tremendous desire for innovation and to serve the community, especially in the Buffalo Branches. Director Spears continued to observe we are still emerging from a pandemic, and he wants to focus on how to move forward.

Chair K. Johnson stated she appreciated how in-depth and descriptive Director Spears was with his recap of the past year and how impressed she has been with his wealth of

knowledge. Trustee Bucki also thanked him for a thorough and thoughtful recap and reflection.

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

B&ECPL Monthly Report April 2023

Buffalo Branches are “Growing” - East Clinton Branch Library is home to a new seed library, with donations and funds provided by the Kaisertown Friends Association secured through Erie County Legislator Tim Meyer’s office. In addition, the Elaine M. Panty Branch Library added a “Grow Your Own Vegetables” section to their Community Pantry, with gardening tools available as well.



East Clinton Seed Library and Panty “Grow Your Own Vegetables”

Shakespeare Conference - The Central Library hosted 35 visiting scholars from across the country for *Gilding the Guilt: The Gilded Age, Craft Production and the Construction of Cultural Capital*, a workshop co-hosted with the Folger Shakespeare Library, UB Departments of English and Theatre & Dance, UB Libraries, and the UB Arts Collaboratory on April 27 and 28. A keynote address was given by Buffalo-born author Lauren Belfer (*City of Light*). Sessions highlighting the Library’s Rare Books & Special Collections assets were presented by Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio**, Librarian Trainee **Isaac Johnson** provided a tour of the Special Collections Department and exhibits, and Information Services and Outreach Manager **Daniel Caufield** and Librarian **Andrew Maines** conducted tours of the Central Library for participants. In addition, Rare Book Curator **Amy Pickard** presented the story of the Milestones of Science Collection’s formation and the selection of its ultimate home in the Rare Book Collection. **Amy** also shared information about some of the Library’s most treasured items, including all four Shakespeare folios and other 17th century texts as well as manuscript and fine binding publications from the Roycroft Collection. A later presentation also featured a variety of items from the Grosvenor Room’s local history collection, including theater scrapbooks and playbills. Community Engagement

Manager **Anne Conable** was the Library's liaison for the event, working with presenters for the last two years to plan this workshop.

Coles Branch Library Easter Event – The Coles Branch Library partnered with the Crawford Foundation and YMCA's Y on the Fly to host an Egg Hunt on April 6 for 16 participants and their parents. The event included games and activities in the downstairs meeting room, and the egg hunt took place in the children's space. There were costumed bunnies for families to take pictures with, and all participants walked away with baskets of candy and prizes generously provided by the Crawford Foundation.

Heritage Christian Services - Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** organized a hiring event for Heritage Christian Services held at the Central Library on April 6. Heritage Christian Services works with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to ensure they feel valued and respected. Attendees were interviewed for job openings within the organization and were provided with other resources to assist in independent living.

Launch Pad Makerspace - Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz and Buffalo Toronto Public Media's WBFO The Bridge Program Director Tiffany Bentley visited the Launch Pad Makerspace on April 4 to speak with Launch Pad Manager **Jordan Smith** about the free services and technology that is available for the public. On April 25, Erie County shared the conversation on YouTube, and the video was additionally shared on Mark Poloncarz's Twitter, Erie County's Facebook page, and other social media outlets.

Money Smart Week - **Andrew Maines** facilitated virtual programming for Money Smart Week from April 17 – 20. *Money Smart Week* is a national public education program coordinated by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and the American Library Association that empowers people with the knowledge and skills to make better-informed personal financial decisions. Programs included *Family Budgeting*, a program in Spanish titled *Instituciones Financieras (Financial Institutions)*, *Debt Relief*, and *Employer Retirement Plans*.

1. Public Services

Central Library:

Author Talk - **Andrew Maines** hosted local award-winning author Stephen Eoannou on April 29. The author read from and discussed his books, including the forthcoming *Yesteryear*, the story of Buffalo-based radio playwright Fran Striker, creator of the Lone Ranger.

Baby-Toddler Storytime – Children's Services and Outreach Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** presented *Baby-Toddler Storytime* in the B is for Book exhibit area at the Central Library on Thursdays throughout the month of April.

Genealogy Presentations – Susan Buttaccio provided a virtual presentation on April 5 titled *Government Secrets Revealed: Board of Supervisor’s Reports and Proceedings*. On April 8, **Susan** facilitated a virtual presentation organized by Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** about Masonic Genealogy resources that was presented by Alexander Vastola of the Livingstone Masonic Library to Family History researchers. **Susan** also presented to members of the Historical Society of the Tonawandas on April 13 and to members of the Ladies Society of St. Philip the Apostle Church in Cheektowaga on April 17 about resources available in the Grosvenor Room.

Tours & Class Visits - Children’s Services and Outreach Librarian **Judith Slawinski** welcomed a visit from a Pre-K/Kindergarten class from Buffalo Public School #32 Bennett Park Montessori on April 14. Children were provided with a storytime, songs, and activities with the theme April Showers Bring May Flowers. Featured guest storyteller and retired library employee Nancy Smith assisted with the visit. Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** and **Isaac Johnson** provided a tour of the Grosvenor Room and Mark Twain Room as well as the *Four Centuries of Bookbinding: The Jordan Collection and B is for Book* exhibits on April 22.

WNY Women’s March – The Central Library was the end point and programming location for the WNY Women’s March on March 26. Coordinated by the WNY Peace Center and several other organizations, African drummers and 15 enthusiastic speakers on a variety of social causes rallied a large crowd that filled the library’s Ring of Knowledge.

Art for Learning WNY Programs – Daily programming presented by Arts for Learning WNY in the Ring of Knowledge celebrated *National Young Audiences Week* during the school break and *Love Your Library Month*. Programs included hula hooping, Bollywood dance, and drawing superheroes workshops; a lively interactive Dance Party; and The Hill Brothers musical show.

Free Guitar Concert – The Hispanic Heritage Council of WNY hosted a free Master Class with visiting Cuban artist Laura Mazon for young guitar students, followed by her concert in the auditorium on April 23. This was the first of three free guitar concerts that will take place at the Central Library this year.

Buffalo Branches:

One-on-One Technology Training – All Buffalo Branch libraries offered one-on-one technology training in April, which offers dedicated time for individualized attention on tasks such as resume building, software help, and job searches.

Dudley Branch Library - Family Movie screenings were held on April 8 and April 22. Dudley Branch Library staff held three crafting events: Kids Craft Hour on April 6 and 20 and Adult Craft Hour on April 11.

East Clinton Branch Library – Lego club met once this month.

Coles Branch Library - Two Teen Manga Club virtual meetings were held by Branch Manager **Danielle Ptak** on April 10 and 17.

Merriweather Branch Library - A new Book Club has started meeting at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library, hosted by Branch Manager **Joshua Mitch**. The group, known as the B Q Bookclub, meets monthly. Several chess tournaments and events were hosted at the library, sponsored by Coach McDuffie of the Archangel 8 Chess Academy. On April 28, the Wakanda Alliance and the African American Veterans Arts and Culture Corporation sponsored a Superhero In You program.

North Park Branch Library - On April 5, Senior Library Clerk **Alyssa Clark** collaborated with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning to host a D.I.Y. Rain Barrel and Composting Workshop. She also arranged for the Farmer Pirates and The Tool Library to table during the program. Branch Manager **Taylor Harding** reached out to the Buffalo Chess Association to host five Beginner Chess Classes at North Park starting April 14. On April 25, North Park Library hosted Books for Kids' Campaign Kickoff in collaboration with Branch Manager **Taylor Harding's** storytime. The storytime and kickoff were featured in The Buffalo News.

Panty Branch Library - Program highlights included the Really, Really Free Market goods exchange for Earth Day with BRRAlliance, Movie Matinee featuring *WALL-E*, and The Business of Music.

Outreach:

Events - As part of the Erie County Senior Services' University Express program, TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella** provided *Computer Basics* classes at Tosh Collins Community Center, Baptist Manor Senior Apartments, and Westminster Commons Senior Housing throughout the month. **Andrew Maines** participated in the Collins Correctional Facility *Re-entry Fair* on April 13. Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Carol Kowalik-Happy** participated in the Townsquare Media's *Job Fair & Career Expo* held at the Eastern Hills Mall in Williamsville on April 18. **Carol** also presented at SCORE's *Starting and Managing Your Own Business* workshop held at Daemen University on April 20. Children's Services and Outreach Librarian **Kelly Woods** provided tabling on April 30 at the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Kids event titled *Dan Brown Wild Symphony*, which featured a multimedia show of the author's picture book *Wild Symphony*. The BPO generously allowed the Children's Department to raffle off free tickets for the event.

B is for Book Exhibit:

	Number of Visitors		
	Month	YTD	From Opening (9/2020 to Present)
Non Tour-Related	1,799	9,124	57,707
Tour/Program	153	497	3,023
Total	1,952	9,621	60,730

2. Collection Development

Digital Collections - 10 Years of Progress was added to the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority collection. This retrospective report covers the activities of the BMHA from 1934-1944 and contains a number of photographs of public and veteran housing projects, including the Commodore Perry Homes.

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	2,414	10,611	228	1,147	536,565
Young Adult Print	602	2,771	70	447	80,046
Adult Print	3,444	14,021	743	3,028	1,796,483
Media	1,822	9,945	251	1,045	560,132
Other*	1,640	7,470	42	239	171,447
Subtotal	9,922	44,818	1,334	5,906	3,144,673

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	2,539	12,182	1,339	5,341	106,866
eAudiobooks	5,075	16,769	347	1,312	68,405
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,656
Subtotal	7,614	28,951	1,686	6,653	179,927

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

All Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Total	17,536	73,769	3,020	12,559	3,324,600

3. Fundraising

Fundraising:

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 - April 30, 2023	\$64,912.64

Mass Emails - A Program Highlight email featuring Genealogy was sent April 12 to over 2,000 past donors. An email acknowledging Library Week was sent April 24 to over 2,000 past donors.

Night at the Ballpark - This annual fundraiser with the Buffalo Bisons is planned for July 28. More details will be forthcoming.

4. Staff Development

PURSUIT of tRUTH Conference - Assistant Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden** and **Susan Buttaccio** attended the *5/14 Remembrance, Recovery, and Prevention of Hate Conference* on April 21 at Buffalo State University. A series of panels discussed racism & white supremacy, activism & advocacy, gun violence, grief, and community healing.

COSUGI Conference - Five staff members attended the virtual *COSUGI Conference 2023* from April 25 - 27. The theme was Libraries Inspiring Change, and the event featured a variety of sessions relevant to SirsiDynix customers, including *SirsiDynix Symphony, Symphony Web, and Data Control: What's New in 2023; MobileStaff: Takin' It to the Stacks; and Jumping Into the Library of Things*. It was also an opportunity to network with staff from other libraries that use the same Integrated Library System.

Webinars - Staff also attended a variety of pertinent webinars throughout April, including *Building Community Through Book Clubs* (presented by Niche Academy), *Innovations with Sanborn Maps* (presented by Library of Congress), and *Under Scrutiny: Helping Staff Feel Safe and Empowered in the Face of Book Challenges* (presented by ALA).

5. Communications

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Taped radio show in the Launch Pad with Librarian Jordan Smith, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz and WBFO Radio's The Bridge	Recording Studio Resources	WBFO, posted in late April 2023
Taped TV news interview with Library Director John Spears	Update on the Central Library security situation	WIVB TV Channel 4, April 11
Taped radio news interview with WBEN Radio and Library Director John Spears	Update on weapon detectors for Central Library	WBEN Radio, April 19
Taped radio talk show interview with Library Director John Spears	Library Awareness Month and programming updates	WECK Radio, aired on April 23
Live TV news interview with Library Director John Spears	National Library Week, Right to Read Day, and library programs	WGRZ TV Channel 2, April 24
Media Release	National Library Week	Townsquare Media, week of April 24
Media Release	Books for Kids 2023 Campaign	Sent April 25

Media Event featuring Library Director John Spears and storytime with North Park Manager Taylor Harding	Books for Kids 2023 community donation campaign with partners from Wegmans, Channel 2, and The Buffalo News	The Buffalo News and WGRZ TV Channel 2, April 25
Taped radio news interview with ADD Joy Testa Cinquino	Books for Kids 2023 campaign	WBLK Radio, April 26 and 27
Taped TV news interview with Library Director John Spears	Update on weapon detectors for Central Library	WIVB TV Channel 4, April 27

Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	92	426	11,697	18,014	46	11,705
Flickr	55	208	5,700	22,793	-	59
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	-	-	N/A	N/A
Instagram	11	70	1,442	7,645	57	4,899
Pinterest	12	65	88	374	2	2,110
Podcast ²	2	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TikTok	-	1	169	851	19	474
Twitter	67	252	331	2,059	(24)	11,005
YouTube	4	30	1,074	5,033	6	506
Total	20,501	56,769	106	30,758	20,501	56,769

¹Google Ads is provided to the Library through a grant. Monthly activity based on public clicks and verified calls from the Library's online advertisement.

²Podcast public activity measurement cannot be tracked accurately because it is available through multiple applications.

6. Partnerships

Buffalo Public Schools - Susan Buttaccio met on April 26 with Richard Pyszcsek, Social Studies Coordinator for the Buffalo Public Schools to begin collaborating on incorporating primary resources available in the Special Collections Department at the Central Library into the Social Studies curriculum in the Buffalo Public Schools.

New York Immigration Coalition - Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Kuniko Simon** participated in *Immigrant Tea Time*, a virtual discussion/information session about "Environment & Society" hosted by the New York Immigration Coalition on April 20. During the session, **Kuniko** discussed the B&ECPL's role in housing government environmental records such as environmental impact statements and let attendees know local public inspection documents are available to the public for free.

7. Planning for the Future

Taking Pride in Our Story - Assistant Deputy Directors **Dorinda Darden** and **Samantha Purpora** attended a meeting at City Hall on April 5 with Council Member

Mitch Nowakowski, Legislative Assistant Tess Rine, and Legislative Aide Derek Smith to discuss Council Member Nowakowski sponsoring a program that will include storytimes that celebrate the diversity of LGBTQ+ and disability communities and free books for the first 50 families on gender expression, disabilities, and self-expression. On April 12, Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Maria Lowe** met with Council Member Nowakowski and Tess Rine to provide them with a suggested selection of books for the program. The program, titled *Taking Pride in Our Story*, will be held in the Reading Park at the Central Library on June 24.

Genealogy Programs - Susan Buttaccio met with Maria Tidwell, the President of the Western New York Genealogical Society, on April 26 about future programming including *Family History Day* at the Central Library on June 10 and the *New York State Family History Conference* presented by the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society on November 2-4 in Buffalo.

5/14 Remembrance Weekend - The Library2Go van, ADDs **Samantha Purpora** and **Joy Testa Cinquino**, and two members of the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. staff will participate in the *5/14 Remembrance Weekend of Reflection, Healing & Hope* at the Johnnie B. Wiley Amateur Athletic Sports Pavilion with Project Flight, Wegmans, Channel 2, The Buffalo News, and City of Buffalo organizers. We will be giving out books and managing the reading and reflection circle.

8. Director Activities

**Meetings/Events Attended by Director
April 2023**

Date	Meeting/Event
April 3, 2023	Meeting - Clinton Parker, Restoration Society
April 3, 2023	Meeting - Ken Stone
April 4, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
April 4, 2023	Conference Call - Robert Patterson, Bond Schoeneck & King
April 4, 2023	Media Filming - WBFO Highlighting Launch Pad Makerspace with Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz and Launch Pad Manager Jordan Smith
April 4, 2023	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO Mini-Conference
April 5, 2023	Meeting - Odessa Hunter
April 5, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
April 5, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
April 5, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
April 6, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Erie County Cultural Colleagues
April 6, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden, Samantha Purpora
April 7, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 10, 2023	Interviews - Library Purchasing Coordinator
April 11, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
April 11, 2023	Meeting - Evolv Technology
April 11, 2023	Media Interview - WKBW TV Channel 7

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

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April 11, 2023	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
April 11, 2023	Meeting - Ken Stone
April 12, 2023	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Managers/Directors
April 12, 2023	Interview - Library Purchasing Coordinator
April 12, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
April 12, 2023	Conference Call - Patty Uttaro, Monroe County Library System
April 13, 2023	Virtual Meeting - MetLib Standing Committee
April 13, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden, Samantha Purpora
April 13, 2023	Interview - Library Purchasing Coordinator
April 13, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees Executive Committee
April 13, 2023	Event - State of the County Address
April 13, 2023	Media Interview - Buffalo News
April 14, 2023	Event - May 14th Collecting Initiative Facilitated Session
April 14, 2023	Meeting - Sheryl Knab, WNYLRC
April 15, 2023	Event - Honoring the Legacy of Women, Past & Present, In Our City Panel Discussion at Central Library
April 15, 2023	Event - Amherst Public Library Audubon Branch Dedication
April 17, 2023	Interview - Controller
April 17, 2023	Media Interview - WIVB TV Channel 4
April 17, 2023	Meeting - Administrative Team
April 17, 2023	Webinar - Intellectual Freedom in New York
April 18, 2023	Meeting - Security/Safety
April 18, 2023	Interview - Controller
April 18, 2023	Meeting - ErieNet Board of Directors
April 18, 2023	Meeting - WNYLRC Board of Trustees
April 19, 2023	Virtual Meeting - WNY Digital Equity Coalition
April 19, 2023	Virtual Meeting - NYLA Legislative Committee
April 19, 2023	Media Interview - WBEN Radio
April 19, 2023	Media Interview - WECK Radio
April 19, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
April 19, 2023	Greeting - Rene Jones, M&T Bank
April 20, 2023	Interviews - Controller
April 20, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden, Samantha Purpora
April 20, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors
April 20, 2023	Event - City of Buffalo 2024 Capital Budget Hearings
April 20, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
April 21, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 21, 2023	Meeting/Tour of Central Library - Lisa Kropp, NYLA President-Elect
April 22, 2023	Event - Free Speech or Freedom to Incite Hate Town Hall at Buffalo State University
April 24, 2023	Meeting - Sarah Potwin, Niagara Falls Public Library
April 24, 2023	Interview/Presentation - Library Purchasing Coordinator
April 24, 2023	Media Interview - WGRZ TV Channel 2

April 25, 2023	Media Event - Books for Kids Launch at North Park Branch Library
April 25, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
April 25, 2023	Meeting - Ken Stone
April 26, 2023	Meeting - Jeannine Doyle, Erin Vest
April 26, 2023	Meeting - Isaias Gonzalez-Soto Branch Phase 1 Construction
April 26, 2023	Event - Seed Lending Library Launch Party at Orchard Park Public Library
April 26, 2023	Event - BABEL
April 27, 2023	Event - Erie County Legislature Meeting
April 27, 2023	Meeting - Central Staff member
April 27, 2023	Media Interview - WIVB TV Channel 4
April 27, 2023	Event - Gilding the Guilt Folger Shakespeare Library Workshop Keynote at Central Library
April 28, 2023	Meeting - Chamus Hawk
April 28, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 29, 2023	Event - Gilding the Guilt Folger Shakespeare Library Workshop Closing Reception at University at Buffalo

Appendices

A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	916	3470	3047	9457
Children 5 and under	1326	4205	4019	14857
Children 6-11	1381	7303	2529	13394
Intergenerational/Combined	4349	17415	11099	34682
Teens	383	1344	996	3990
Regular Total	8355	33737	21690	76380
Regular Total	8355	33737	21690	76380
Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	19	89	191	1135
Children 5 and under	1	4	0	3
Children 6-11	0	3	0	88
Intergenerational/Combined	6	24	171	912
Teens	2	48	10	135
Live Virtual Total	28	168	372	2273
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	6	22	147	618
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	6	488	1148
Intergenerational/Combined	13	38	288	1118
Teens	0	1	0	20
Recorded Virtual Total	21	67	923	2904

Virtual Total	49	235	1295	5177
Grand Total	8404	33972	22985	81557

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

Other Statistics:

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

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, Wi-Fi usage, and library visits can be found at www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2023-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail.

B. Contracting Library Activity Reports

Angola Public Library - submitted by Jennifer Page, Director

Environmental Fair - On April 22, we participated in the Environmental Fair hosted by the Evans Center Fire Hall. We were able to speak to many people about the environmental benefits of using the library and resources we offer to help toward sustainability and conservation.

Family Fun Walk - On April 22, we joined with Lake Shore Central School’s Family Support Center for their annual Family Fun Walk. We were able to meet with many families before and after the walk. Library cards were also offered for both children and adults.

GED Prep Classes - We are pleased to be partnering with Erie2BOCES to host classes to help our local citizens prepare to take their GED test. Classes are offered every Tuesday and Thursday.

Botanical Gardens Terrarium Program - We are looking forward to hosting the Buffalo Botanical Gardens and bringing their popular terrarium program to the library. Participants will learn about plants and the inner workings of the water cycle while creating a terrarium to take home.

Summer Fun at the Library - We are about to start our summer fun club at the library. Something will be happening every day this summer with crafting, games, movies, and events, including a visit from Hawk Creek Wildlife Center.

Clarence Public Library - submitted by Monica Mooney, Director

Seed Library & Gardening Programs - The Clarence Public Library began a Seed Library in March. This initiative has been very popular, and in the first month alone, we circulated over 1,000 seed packets. Volunteers from the Garden Friends of Clarence and the Clarence High School Garden Club have been instrumental in helping us sort, label, and package the seeds, which were donated by several seed companies as well as members of the community. To correlate with the Seed Library, we have partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County and its Master Gardener speaker series to provide several educational programs at the Clarence Public Library, including *Go Native with Your Plants* on May 15, *Vegetable Gardening: The Magic of Growing Your Own Food* on May 25, and *For the Birds: Transforming Your Outdoor Space into a Place Birds will Flock* on June 12.

Arts for Learning WNY Program - On May 18, we will be hosting Rock 'N' Roll Guitar with Doug Yeomans. The program will trace the guitar's cultural impact on various styles of music, from Blues to Country, Bluegrass, Jazz, Reggae, and Rock and Roll. This program is part of a series presented in conjunction with Arts for Learning WNY and funded with support from the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo: Daniel C. and Beatrice M. Fisher Fund. Other recent programs that have already been presented through this series include Reading is Magic, Balloon Art, Collage Creation, Andy Parker's Weather Machine, and World Drumming with Ringo Bril.

Memory/Reminisce Kits - The Clarence Public Library now circulates Memory/Reminisce Kits. These new kits are geared to be used by caregivers or activity professionals working with individuals experiencing memory loss. The kits provide reminisce therapy and are designed bring a sense of comfort and happiness based on an individual's favorite things. Currently we have 11 kits to circulate. Themes include *Dogs and Cats*, *Summer and the Beach*, *Kitchen*, *Birds*, *Tools*, *1950s*, and *1960s*. This is an ongoing project and more kits will be added in the coming weeks. Funding for our Memory/Reminisce Kits is made possible with a grant from the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo: Daniel C. and Beatrice M. Fisher Fund.

Writers Group - A new Writers Group is forming at the Clarence Public Library. Have you heard about T.H.A.T. (The Happy Authors Troupe)? The purpose of this group is to encourage writers to write more often and improve their craft. The emphasis of our group will be on support rather than critique. We will focus on all types of writing including essays, short stories, magazine articles, blogs, poetry, novels, non-fiction, etc. There will be an informational meeting at the Clarence Public Library on June 1.

Agenda Item G - Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy detailed the Foundation meeting of May 16. She announced they have two new Trustees, Samantha Nephew and Heather Cruz, and Anne Leary has resigned. Trustee El-Behairy said the Foundation's next step is to move into strategic planning.

Agenda Item H - The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Chair K. Johnson mentioned the ACT Workshop happening at

the Central Library on May 20. Martha Buyer left a note on the Zoom chat reiterating the date of the ACT Workshop and her hope that System Trustees attend.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee Sasiadek attended the Orchard Park Public Library’s Board meeting on May 16 at 9:00 a.m. Their board acknowledged the time is inconvenient for most people. Trustee Sasiadek reported at the meeting it was addressed that the Orchard Park Public Library requires more space particularly for an activity room. Currently, their meeting room has a capacity of 49 people, and they push up against that often. Orchard Park Public Library is currently trying to come up with a plan to either reconfigure their space or expand. They are also trying to build a relationship with their Town Board. Trustee Sasiadek also noted that they are concerned about the possibility of book ban attempts coming to the town. He conveyed they discussed the *Fine Free Initiative* and had positive feedback except for email correspondence when items are overdue; they think the emails can be clearer.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. Odessa Hunter introduced herself and commented she is continuing to seek justice for an incident that occurred in October 2021. She provided copies to Board members of a letter sent to her on May 11, 2023 by Director Spears. She went on to explain she wants a retraction of a previous letter and summarized a meeting she had with Director Spears. Hunter stated she is open to having other Board members speak with her about the situation.

Monica Boutin, the liaison between the B&ECPL and Erie County, thanked the Library and commented how beneficial it is to the community.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K – New Business. Trustee Panty commented that in the past the whole Board has gone to member libraries, usually twice a year, for regular Board meetings. This facilitates a personal relationship with other boards, and Trustees can experience different libraries. Trustee Panty emphasized the meetings would have to be when the weather is favorable. Trustee El-Behairy suggested the first meeting occur at Grand Island Memorial Library. Discussion ensued. Trustee Gist suggested the Frank E. Merriweather Jr. Branch Library as an option. Multiple suggestions were made.

Agenda Item L – Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee T. Johnson with a second by Trustee Moore, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore
Secretary