



MEDIA RELEASE

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Buffalo's Riverside Branch Library Renamed in Honor of Longtime Library Advocate Elaine M. Panty

The Elaine M. Panty Branch Library of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System was officially renamed in honor of library advocate and supporter Ms. Elaine M. Panty during a dedication ceremony yesterday afternoon. Community members, friends of the library, and elected officials were on hand for the presentations, proclamations, music and refreshments. The Library, which opened in March 1945 in a different location, has always been known as the Riverside Branch. The current location at 820 Tonawanda Street opened in November 1986.

A Buffalo native and graduate of the University at Buffalo, Elaine M. Panty has a long association with the Riverside community demonstrated by her service as a leader of the Riverside Businessmen's Association, Northwest Buffalo Community Development Corporation and Town Boys' Club, among other organizations. She is best known for her leadership of the *Friends of the Riverside Library*, which in 1983 successfully lobbied Erie County against the Library's closure of its previous storefront building (at 822 Tonawanda Street) over budget cuts. She then convinced Buffalo leaders to fund and build a new full-service Library building. As a vital supporter of libraries, Ms. Panty has organized dozens of book sales and family programs. She is retired from the City of Buffalo Division of Water. She was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System in 1988 and has served on multiple committees since then.

"The name Elaine Panty is just about synonymous with the Riverside neighborhood and its Library," stated Jeannine Doyle, interim director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System. "We are so pleased to be able to honor her legacy, dedication and most generous years of service in this way now and for many years to come."

Library System Board Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki recognized Ms. Panty for her devotion toward working with her neighbors to advocate for local libraries. Several elected officials were on hand to present proclamations including Buffalo Common Council Member Joseph Golombek, Jr., who spearheaded the name change process. Also honoring Ms. Panty were New York State Senator Sean Ryan, New York State Assemblyman William Conrad, III, Erie County Legislator Howard Johnson, Lynne Dixon from the Erie County Comptroller's office, and retired Common Council Member Richard Fontana.

The Elaine M. Panty Branch Library is open Monday and Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Tuesday and Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Library holds an estimated 26,612 books and has 19 public computers, free WiFi, meeting room seating for 40 and year-round public programming. More information is available at www.BuffaloLib.org or by calling the Branch directly at 875-0562.



Elaine M. Panty at the name dedication ceremony, 9/20/2021
Photo courtesy of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System

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