

DIRECTOR'S 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Throughout the past year, Eden Library staff continued their tradition of offering excellent customer service known throughout Erie County. Staff circulated books and other library materials, created displays, performed reader's advisory service, and made each and every library user's visit a special one.

In 2025, Eden Library welcomed **15,266** patrons through their doors who collectively checked out **40,361** items, used public computers **1,299** times and accessed the library's WiFi network **3,079** times (the latter, an increase of 23.5% over 2024). **1,465** people attended **153** library-sponsored programs during the year, with offerings for all ages. Program attendance increased 3.4% over 2024; the number of program offerings increased 8.5% over the previous year.

Community involvement/Partnerships/Outreach:

Eden Library continued its partnership with Erie County Department for the Aging (formerly Erie County Senior Services) to present 14 programs in the popular University Express lecture series, aimed at citizens 55 and up. Eden's offerings included talks on climate action and sustainability, legendary broadcaster John Zack's radio career, the Pony Express, local fossil history, the origins of Halloween, estate planning, tales of the Great Lakes and even a gardening seminar on growing chocolate-scented plants. Lectures drew 122 participants from across the county ...and several new library cardholders!

Late in the year, the library again partnered with Eden Volunteer Fire Department Number One for an event aimed at raising awareness of both community institutions, a holiday letter to Santa promotion. Kids could compose a last-minute wish or two at the library and then "mail" the letter to the North Pole at the fire house. Several young patrons later excitedly shared that they received a response from Saint Nick himself!

During 2025 the library partnered with several area business and service providers offering community workshops and events. Representatives from Sheridan Benefits presented two programs on Medicare basics, and Buffalo-based Soccer Shots brought a small but eager group of children for a special sports-themed storytime and soccer drills on the front lawn. ARC Erie County brought three groups of clients to the library for field trips during the summer, and Rayzor's Dawg House, a Main Street business, held two recruitment fairs at the library. Eden Parks and Recreation brought 32 students to the library in July, allowing them the chance to check out books and beat the summer heat. A pre-teen patron organized a Kindness Club which met three times during July and August, offering fun free activities promoting good character to elementary-aged students.

Members of Saint John's Lutheran Church's bell choir performed a concert of seasonal music in December at the library. Concertgoers brought non-perishable food items to benefit clients of the Eden-North Collins Food Pantry.

Library Director Donna-Jo Webster visited local schools twice during the year, at Eden Middle School for Literacy Night (February) and at Grover L. Priess Primary School for Reading Night (October). She shared information about the library's services with a total of 91 students and their families. Several attendees took applications for new library cards during the outreaches.

Throughout the year, the library distributed free tax forms and COVID-19 test kits. Chromebooks and hotspots became popular items for patrons to borrow, especially for those without home Internet service. Self-directed CPR kits joined the library's latest offerings.

Donors/Contributors/Grants:

The library benefitted from two non-memorial donations totaling \$2,760.00. All-Points Media, in conjunction with the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, gave a stipend of \$50 for having their career opportunities banner displayed in the building. Author and former Eden Library Director Joyce Maguda contributed proceeds from the sale and signing of her children's book "Mister Turkey's Song."

The Board of Trustees graciously hosted a summer kick-off picnic in early July, which drew 96 participants of all ages. The picnic took place on the library's front lawn just after the "Freddy Frog Rockin' Rabbit Foam Party" sponsored by the Friends. Trustees offered freshly grilled hot dogs, chips and bottled water to picnickers. Eden Shur Fine Market generously donated hot dogs and buns for the occasion.

Equipment and Facilities:

Staff from the Town of Eden's Highway Department snowplowed Library parking lots and provided grass cutting service in 2025. The library purchased new room-darkening shades for the meeting room windows.

Friends of Eden Library:

Annual collection of membership dues continued to be the group's main fundraiser. In addition to membership letters to individuals, the Friends requested corporate sponsorship from local businesses, which gained numerous positive responses. Fundraising efforts allowed the group to sponsor several library events throughout the year, including a hands-on butter lamb make 'n take, a presentation about early surveyor Joseph Ellicott, an author talk, a summer foam party, and a special evening storytime and costume parade for Halloween, with several Friends board members dressed in costumes giving out treats. The Friends Board met in-person at the library in January, March, May, July, September and October.

Library Personnel:

After more than 26 years of service with Eden, Clerk Typist Cynthia Bancroft resigned her position in August to become a family caregiver. Shortly after, Clerk Typist Claire Blandino resigned her position, after a mere ten months of service, to attend graduate school in North Carolina. We welcomed Clerk Typists Kelly Sullivan and Samantha Wilson to our staff in September. Senior Clerk Helga Antonou, Clerk Typist Cheryl Colvin, and Caretaker/Custodian Tony Sacilowski continued in their respective roles. All staff members completed annual compliance training in cyber security, avoiding sexual harassment and preventing workplace violence. Each of the clerks presented at least one program, series of library events, or created book displays. Clerk-led offerings included Lego builder's group, cookbook club, and a needlecraft group.

Volunteers:

Eden Library utilized 11 volunteers who gave a combined 108.25 hours of service at booksales, basement book inventory cleanouts, picnics, and others events during the year.

Yarn Club:

After 18 years of continuing service to the Eden community and beyond, Eden's Yarn Club surpassed a huge milestone at the end of 2025. Club members created and donated over 10,100 knitted or crocheted items to charities as of December.

In conclusion, the Eden Library continues to serve as an important asset and community hub to the citizens of Eden and beyond, a vital and thriving resource to all. Patrons from across Erie County enjoy ongoing no-cost programs, knowledgeable speakers, free access to books, magazines, newspapers, music, digital content and the Internet. The library offers “one-stop shopping” for everything needed for lifelong learning and enjoyment: board games to cookbooks, home Internet to health care items. Eden Library provides a clean, comfortable and inviting space for people to interact with others, explore the world around them and participate in their community.

The library remains truly appreciative of its dedicated, hard-working staff, the guidance and leadership received from its Board of Trustees, and for its continued positive relationship with the Town of Eden. As the library concludes its 115th year of service, we recall our rich, shared past and eagerly look forward to the future.

Donna-Jo Webster, Library Director