

As school ended this year, all branches have been bustling, with attendance up 26% YTD over last year. Lots of school visits and some big end-of-school programs certainly contributed to that increase. There is so much adventure to be had at our library this summer!

Personnel

I am very happy to welcome Bushra Ahmed, our newest team member at the Coldwater Library! We have also posted for an upcoming opening for our Teen Services Coordinator.

Facilities

The final bills are in for the Coldwater Branch Carpeting Project, and the grand total for materials, labor, all the moving required, and some extra unexpected repairs needed in this old building: \$117,062.78. That breaks down to \$85,824.65 to Willowbrook Interiors, and \$31,238.13 to Mulder's Moving and Storage. This is under the total approved quotes for the two vendors, but since it is about \$17,000 over our anticipated costs in the 2024 budget, we will not be pursuing the outdoor signage project originally budgeted for this year. Especially since our Coldwater Branch restroom project is expected to cost more than we originally thought. We expect the plans for the Coldwater Branch Restrooms to be completed this week or next, and then we will begin seeking bids.

The Alganssee Twp. Board has voted to pursue a solution for their lot which includes two separate buildings instead of an addition to the current hall. The plan as it stands now is to build a new hall on the current site, then renovate the existing hall for use as a library. I plan to attend their next meeting on July 1 to learn more.

Partner Contracts

Two contract negotiations are currently in the works: Allen Twp. is considering our proposal for updating our service agreement with that Hillsdale township. And Sheryl Watson, Sherwood Village President, requested that the Library and Village update our contract. Though it would have been opportune, we won't have anything to report on this topic when we are at the Sherwood Branch Monday for our meeting. I hope to have more to tell you soon on these topics.

Insurance Transition

The transition from Vested/Cincinnati to Decker/MTPP has been very smooth, and we are now fully onboard with the Decker Agency and a locked-in rate for three years. Chris and Jenalle at Vested have made this process so easy and deserve praise for their assistance and good customer service as much as for their honesty and candor.

Submitted by John Rucker

June is Audiobook Month!

I remember my very first audiobook. It was at 5th Grade Camp and I fell asleep to "The Lion, Witch, and the Wardrobe". From that day on I was Team Audiobook. Those were the days when audiobooks were on cassettes and the story ended when no one was around to put in the next tape.

Audiobooks offer numerous benefits, including accessibility for visually impaired individuals, convenience for multitaskers, and a screen-free alternative for children. According to the Audio Publishers Association's 2024 Consumer Survey, a majority of U.S. adults (52%) have listened to an audiobook in the last year. Children's audiobook listening remains strong, with 53% percent of audiobook listeners with children saying their kids also listen to audiobooks. According to 77% of these parents, a key benefit of audiobooks is giving their children a break from screens. Current audiobook consumers use digital library apps in combination with subscription services. With 46% of them saying they've borrowed a digital audiobook from a library in the last year.

Check out your local library for traditional audiobooks on CDs as well as digital options through platforms like Libby and Hoopla. These platforms provide easy access to thousands of titles, making it convenient for users to enjoy audiobooks on various devices. Additionally, Audiobook Month serves as an opportunity to explore new genres, rediscover classic titles, and promote literacy in the community.

June is a reminder of the endless possibilities that audiobooks offer for enriching our lives. Check one out today!

Marketing

Our promotional campaign for the Summer Reading Program is in full swing! Updates on Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram highlight the program's features, upcoming events, reading challenges, and enticing prizes. Meagan Marsh created a promotional video featuring the children of library staff. The video serves as an invitation for Branch County residents to join the Summer Reading Program, emphasizing the fun and rewarding nature of the reading challenges.

The much-anticipated ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Quincy StoryWalk® is scheduled for June 26 at 11am. Led by Sarah Strong, Quincy Branch Manager, preparations for this event are in full swing. The Quincy StoryWalk® initiative combines the joy of reading with outdoor exploration, offering an interactive literary adventure for the community. The ribbon-cutting event not only marks the official launch of the StoryWalk® but also celebrates the collaborative efforts of the library and Quincy community to promote literacy.

Human Resources

I conducted an orientation for Bushra Ahmed, our newest Coldwater Public Service Clerk. Welcome Busha to the library!

Submitted,

Kimberly Feltner

- The 2024 Summer Reading Program is here! We are a week into the summer and we have 300 registrations so far with 2 program completions already! We have so many incredible programs happening this summer and we are so excited for them! Our two largest programs this summer will be the BMX Stunt Show and our end of Summer Reading Wrap-up Foam Party! There's going to be two food trucks: El Cunado and Carey's Cakery & Bake Shop food truck.



- The past month has been wildly busy with interviews and trainings and meetings! I attended the following meetings: Branch County Community Network, a marketing meeting, and a Coldwater Public Library board meeting. I also attending a Canva training for marketing purposes.



- The 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Graduation is tentatively scheduled for August 17th. We currently have 5 graduates and could possibly have 2 more by the time invitations go out in 6 weeks!