

Board of Trustees of the Upper Sandusky Community Library

Minutes

January 9, 2025

The Upper Sandusky Community Library Board of Trustees convened on Thursday, January 9, at 12:00 p.m. in the Library Board Room with the following members present: Ms. Jenny Romich, Ms. Dianne Grafmiller, Mr. Ben Buckland, Mr. Todd Leightey, Mr. Brian Kimmel, and Ms. Ann Kemerley. Ms. Amy Aldridge-Ritchey was absent. Director/Fiscal Officer Kathleen Whitt and Deputy Fiscal Officer/Technology Coordinator/Assistant Manager for Facilities Patricia Davidson were also present, as was Brian Hemminger of the *Daily Chief-Union*.

Organizational Meeting:

Ms. Romich called the meeting to order at 12:00 and requested nominations for Board officers. Nominations were moved and seconded to retain for President: Ms. Romich; Vice President: Ms. Grafmiller; Secretary: Ms. Kemerley; and to reappoint Director Kathleen Whitt as Fiscal Officer and Patricia Davidson as Deputy Fiscal Officer. All present approved the motion.

Mr. Buckland in his capacity as notary administered the oath of office to Ms. Kemerley, who is starting a new term as Library Trustee, and to Director Kathleen Whitt as Fiscal Officer and Patricia Davidson as Deputy Fiscal Officer.

It was agreed that committee assignments would stand as follows:

Building & Grounds Committee:	Ann Kemerley, Todd Leightey and Amy Aldridge-Ritchey
Finance Committee:	Ben Buckland, Jenny Romich and Brian Kimmel
Friends Liaison:	Dianne Grafmiller

It was moved and seconded to pass a resolution authorizing the Fiscal Officer and Deputy Fiscal Officer to pay the bills with the understanding that payments be ratified at the regular meetings of this Board. In a roll call vote, all approved the motion.

It was agreed to retain the current calendar for monthly meetings on the second Thursday of the month. The meetings will begin at 12:00 p.m.

The Board then reviewed the Annual Report for 2024 as presented by Ms. Whitt. It was moved and seconded to approve the Annual Report as presented. All present voted in favor of accepting the report. The full report is attached to these minutes.

At 12:12, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the Organizational Meeting.

Regular Meeting:

At 12:12, the Regular Meeting convened. President Jenny Romich asked for public comments. Hearing none, Ms. Romich asked if there were corrections or additions to the distributed minutes of the December regular meeting and the December 20 special meeting. Hearing none, Ms. Romich declared the minutes stand as distributed.

Next on the agenda was a motion to ratify the payment of the bills. Ms. Romich asked if there were any questions about the bills. Hearing none, the motion was made and seconded to ratify the payment of bills; in a roll call vote, all present approved the bills.

Ms. Kemerley did have a question about the Appropriations Status report. She asked whether the “Other – Professional Services” line item is for the contracted services with Buckeye IT for computer monitoring and maintenance. Ms. Davidson replied that it is.

Under old business, the board took up the discussion of upgrading the outdoor sign to a digital LED display. They reviewed the revised quote from Classic Sign in Findlay, which includes prices for message boards with 10mm and 8mm pixel pitch resolution, in addition to the previously quoted 16mm. They also reviewed the Building and Grounds Committee’s recommendation that the sign be purchased from Classic Sign, both for their comparatively low cost and their status as a reputable company in the local area. Classic has been in business for several decades, and was able to provide additional information on the sign manufacturer and their products. The board also reviewed the quote from Hoepf Electric to provide a dedicated electrical supply for the sign. The motion was made and seconded to accept the quote from Classic Sign Company for the Watchfire 10mm digital message board and the quote from Hoepf Electric to provide the electrical supply for the sign. In a roll call vote, all present approved the motion.

There was no new business.

In the Director’s Report, Ms. Whitt reported that:

1. Our adult winter reading program, “Idita-READ” is in progress January 6-February 15. Participants get a scratch-off ticket for an opportunity to win an instant prize each time they come in to check out books. Completed scratch-off tickets will be entered for weekly prize drawings for a chance to win hoody blankets and other warming prizes, as well as a Snow Trails adventure package. Participants are also invited to send us a picture of themselves reading with their dog for a chance to win a special gift basket of canine treats and toys.
2. On Saturdays January 11 and 18, ten teams will compete to assemble a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle in two hours. The team that finishes first or has the most pieces put together will win a prize. This is the third year for this very popular competition.
3. On January 13, Patti Davidson will introduce a new twist on her popular culinary series, transitioning from “Taste of History” to “Taste of the Decades,” with favorite recipes from the 1920s: chicken a la king and pineapple upside down cake.
4. Other January programs include the 100 Book Club Halfway Hooray for participants to check in and see how they are progressing, as well as Lunch bunch (Soup and Bread), Common Readers (*The Briar Club*, by Kate Quinn), and Inglorious Bookworms (*Cassandra in Reverse*, by Holly Smale).
5. Storywalks® this month are Kim Norman’s *Ten on the Sled* downtown and Lola Schaefer’s *The Bear and the Star* at Stepping Stones Park. Other children’s activities are our weekly Tiny Tots and Preschool Storytimes, and That Thursday thing, Middle School Storytime, and Wednesday’s after school Hangout.
6. This month we are debuting the WhoFi Meeting Rooms module on our website. This allows library users to place requests for meeting reservations online, as well as helping library staff track meeting room usage and availability. This is in addition to the Community Calendar module for library programs, which patrons can also use to sign themselves up for programs that require preregistration.
7. On December 20, the Wyandot County Budget Commission announced that the Ohio Department of Taxation had increased their estimate for 2025 distributions from

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\$923,252.00 to \$941,311.00. This means an increase from an estimated \$332,370.72 for our library to \$338,871.96 for calendar year 2025.

8. Memorial/Honor/Donations:

In memory of Ross Johnson

Al & Jan Stoneburner

Donation

Quest Federal Credit Union

There were no Items Not on the Agenda.

Ms. Romich asked if there were any other items for discussion. Hearing none, it was moved and seconded at 12:28 to adjourn.

President

Secretary

2024
ANNUAL REPORT
UPPER SANDUSKY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jennifer A. Romich	President	December 31, 2030
Dianne Grafmiller	Vice-President	December 31, 2028
Ann Kemerley	Secretary	December 31, 2024
Amy Aldridge-Ritchey		December 31, 2029
Benjamin C. Buckland		December 31, 2026
Brian Kimmel		December 31, 2027
Todd Leightey		December 31, 2025

STAFF

Kathleen Whitt (Director/Fiscal Officer)
Jill Stansbery: Youth Services Coordinator/Assistant Director
Patricia Davidson: Deputy Fiscal Officer/Technology Coordinator/Assistant Manager for Facilities
Lisa Andres: Youth Services Specialist
Katherine Bardon: Cataloging Assistant
Annette Cheney: Catalog Specialist
Janet Dewolf: Library Assistant (July-December)
Rachel Keirns-Moore: Programming & Display Coordinator/Newsletter Editor
Taryn Korody: Adult Outreach Coordinator
Cheryl Lyon: Cataloging and Adult Programming Assistant
Jennifer McKee: Library Assistant/Genealogical Search Assistant
Hailey Rossel: Library Assistant (January-July)
Krystal Smalley: Marketing and Social Media Coordinator
Lynn Gottfried: Custodian/Maintenance Assistant

HOURS

Monday through Thursday: 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The library was closed for the following holidays in 2024:
New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday; Presidents' Day;
Memorial Day; Juneteenth (June 19); Independence Day; Labor Day;
Columbus Day; Veterans' Day; Thanksgiving Day; Christmas Day.

The library was closed on April 8 for the total solar eclipse.

The library was open for business 300 days.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

OVERVIEW

The library circulated 141,719 items in 2024, an increase of 1.4% from 2023. Average daily circulation was 472.4 items. Overall circulation for the SEO Consortium was up about 1% from 2023. Circulation of materials in the juvenile collection (not including YA) was about 25.7% of total circulation. Movie circulation was again up slightly to 12.81% from 12.47% in 2023. Circulation of e-books was up to 17,691 from 12,510 in 2023—an increase of 41.4%, and another all-time record for e-book circulation at USCL. This represented 12.48% of total circulation, up from 8.95% in 2023. The Ohio Digital Library, in which we participate, reported 10 million checkouts in 2024—also a record number. Resource sharing among SEO libraries with deliveries by Priority Dispatch remains consistent. Our delivery driver is excellent: he doesn't miss deliveries and we are confident that materials shipped from other libraries are getting to us in a timely manner. Outgoing loans to other SEO libraries decreased by about 8.8% from 2023; incoming increased by about 10.5%.

Highlights for the year include:

- The number of visitors to the library increased by about 1%, with a total of 93,112, as compared to 92,134 visitors for 2023.
- The elevator upgrade project was completed in March. Electrical and fire panel work had been done at the end of 2023. Work on the elevator car and controls began the week of February 12 and was completed on March 29. The Davis and Newcomer crew was very professional, and took care to maintain the area clean as they worked. They were not able to help with the longstanding issue of water collecting in the elevator shaft, but recommended we contact a plumber for that project. This was done, and a condensate pump was installed on August 20, eliminating the need to empty the dehumidifier bucket by hand.
- We learned in March that the Upper Sandusky Community Library is one of 50 libraries throughout the country selected to host the *Americans and the Holocaust* traveling exhibition from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the American Library Association. The exhibit examines the motives, pressures and fears that shaped Americans' responses to Nazism, war and genocide in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s. It will be at our library from August 19 to September 30, 2026. We also plan to partner with the Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center in Cincinnati, the Wyandot County Historical Society, the Upper Sandusky schools and more to present programs related to *Americans and the Holocaust* to the community. A grant in connection with the exhibit paid for the library's coordinator for the project, Krystal Smalley, to go to Washington, D.C. in May for orientation and training, as well as for local programming to support the exhibition.
- In April, we launched our newest "collection" – a seed library. Patrons can pick up packets of flower, herb and vegetable seeds to grow at home. They can also gather seeds from their gardens to bring in to share, or even extras they may have left over after planting. The collection is housed in one of our old card catalog cabinets and is located next to the magazines in the adult reading area.

- On June 3, we held the ribbon cutting for our permanent StoryWalk® at Stepping Stones Park. After the ribbon was cut, those who were able walked the trail with kids reading the story to us. The StoryWalk® frames were purchased with a grant received in 2023 from the McCarthy Family Fund with the Wyandot County Community Foundation.
- In September we shared a booth at the Wyandot County Fair with the Mohawk Community Library and Forest Jackson Public Library. We had fun, and we had a lot of good conversations with fairgoers. Our heartfelt thanks go to Board Members and Friends of the Library who volunteered to help at the booth.
- In December we entered a Narnia-themed *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* float in the Home for the Holidays parade. Library staff dressed as Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, Mr. Tumnus, and the White Witch, and children from among our library patrons represented Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy Pevensy. Of course, Aslan was there too. We also decorated a downtown lamp post and a tree at the Wyandot County Museum with Narnian themes.

GENERAL

Staff hours increased slightly from about 9.17 to 9.35 FTEs, as our new library assistant is able to work a few more hours a week than her predecessor.

The SEO consortium continues to use SirsiDynix's Symphony online catalog and Enterprise public access portal. A new feature in the Enterprise public access portal is the Talpa Search AI tool. This allows patrons and staff to enter natural language search phrases to identify items whose author and title are unknown, even by the cover illustrations and color!

Another new tool that we are using is WhoFi. We began using WhoFi's Community Calendar module to list library events on our website, and starting in October patrons began to use it to sign up themselves for programs that require registration. In December we started rolling out the Meeting Rooms module, which allows patrons to request use of our rooms online through the website.

The library uses Unique Management Services (UMS) for collection of unreturned materials and unpaid fees. In 2024, 87 new accounts were submitted to UMS; 61 accounts had action on them (materials returned or fees paid). We collected \$671.05 on placed accounts, and materials valued at \$3,059.67 were returned during the year. Statistics provided by Unique state that cumulative recovery on library accounts by UMS show a return on investment of 5:1. We also use UMS to notify patrons of overdue items, saving a considerable amount of staff time. Unique also notifies patrons of available holds if they request notification by phone, while emails and text notifications are now handled through Patron Point.

In 2024, the library received 37 monetary memorial or honor donations totaling \$2,383.33. In addition, five families either requested specific materials be purchased or donated the materials themselves. Donations were received from Charles and Jean Gottfried, the Pythian Sisters of Ohio, the Mohawk Community Service Club, Wyandot Memorial Hospital, the USANDO Literary Club, and Quest Federal Credit Union. We

received a grant of \$8,720.40 from the Columbus Foundation's David H. and Mary Lois Stansbery Endowment Fund for media and programming to promote the study of science, history and philosophy. We also received a bequest of almost \$52,000 from Sara Lou Brown Binau.

ADULT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

HOMEBOUND DELIVERY AND OUTREACH

Adult Outreach Coordinator Taryn Korody says, "This year has been a wonderful first year for me as the new Adult Outreach Coordinator." At the end of 2023, there were 18 homebound patrons. That number has fluctuated over the year, trending upward, and has been as high as 26. Currently there are 24, with 1 at Vancrest, 1 at Westbrook, 7 at WCSNR, and 15 in their homes or apartments.

Taryn also visits WCSNR once a month. She visits individual patrons in their rooms, and provides a monthly program open to all of the residents there. The programs range from themed trivia to seasonal crafts to travel programs about different countries. On average, about a dozen people attend these programs. The travel programs have been especially popular. While we haven't yet been able to establish this kind of relationship with Vancrest or Westbrook, we plan to continue working to expand our outreach with them.

Taryn says, "The Friends of the Library delivery volunteers are the real heroes of the Homebound Program. They've been so welcoming and helpful this year. This job would be much harder without them, so I am deeply grateful for Jerry, Jackie, Emily, Marilyn, and Marty. I am especially thankful for their good communication. They are always the first to tell me when something is not right or when one of the patrons has an issue. The volunteers are truly the glue that holds this program together."

Taryn also continues to meet with Amy Gardner and the staff at Senior Connections. She attends their monthly book club meetings and has helped Amy with acquiring books. She hopes to be able to collaborate with them more as time goes on.

Taryn and other library staff did 10 library pop-ups this year. Four of those were at Council on Aging events, but we also set up for events around town: Pawzfest, the museum's Ice Cream Social, the re-opening party at The Hub, and one First Thursday event uptown. The first pop-up this year was at Tea Story on Valentine's Day. Colleen Clark was very accommodating and helpful with this. All these events were well attended. We were able to hand out a lot of marketing and promotional materials, especially about the homebound program, and to check out quite a few books and sign up a few new patrons for library cards.

BOOK CLUBS

The library has two book clubs: Common Readers, which has a dedicated group of readers who read the same book every month, and Inglorious Bookworms, which focuses on a different genre every month.

COMMON READERS

Common Readers is a fairly formal group, with the members voting on the titles to be read each month; they meet monthly except for July and December. USCL book club facilitator Krystal Smalley preorders copies of each month's selected title in various formats from other SEO libraries for anyone wishing to participate and facilitates the discussions.

Common Readers was completely in-person for 2024. Attendance averaged 9 members throughout the 10 months the club met, a drop in attendance compared to previous years. The most attended gatherings occurred in February (*Mad Honey*), September (*The First Ladies*), and November (*A Woman Is No Man*).

Krystal sent out a book club check-in survey in August to see how the members felt about the discussion group and what they would like to see changed. Results seem to show that the decline in attendance is related to lack of interest in the books selected this year. Respondents also expressed interest in having authors participate in the discussions and in being able to join the meetings via Zoom. Krystal noted that author Zoom "visits" are a possibility depending on their availability, and that group members may always join the discussions using Zoom upon request.

INGLORIOUS BOOKWORMS

Inglorious Bookworms entered its third year to meet the needs of people who prefer reading genre books. Readers focused on fantasy, science fiction, mystery, romance, and horror.

Inglorious Bookworms had 15 different members attend the various discussions and averaged eight people per discussion. The most well-attended meeting was *The Lies of the Ajungo* by Moses Ose Utomi in September. Year after year, Inglorious Bookworms continues to see an increase in attendance, especially through word of mouth among the readers.

Upon request of the members, in April the group started meeting at Don Tomasso's for their discussions. Though they returned to the library for the May discussion of *Red Rising* by Pierce Brown to play the "Red Rising" board game, the remaining discussions were held at the restaurant.

OTHER PROGRAMS

CRAFT PARTY

Craft Party is a monthly in-person program designed to promote social interaction and creativity. Upon arrival, snacks, drinks and conversation starters are provided. Participants make a craft or two and may participate in a brief party game with prizes. An average of 17 participants attended the ten meetings (there was no meeting in August or September).

LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch is a noontime gathering that meets monthly to share recipes and cooking tips and enjoy a potluck meal. Facilitated by Cheryl Lyon, Lunch Bunch averaged about 16 participants a month; the June meeting was the best-attended, with 21.

TASTE OF HISTORY

Patti Davidson hosted this food-oriented program, continuing the series from last year's Taste of the World, and featuring dishes from around the ancient world. This event takes place every other month. In 2024 attendees learned about and enjoyed flavors from Ancient Egypt, Rome, and Greece, and 14th century Germany, 17th century England, and the 16th century Mughal Empire.

TECH CONNECT

Tech Connect helped patrons 35 times throughout the year, which is consistent with 2023. Krystal helped patrons with a variety of issues, from teaching patrons how to print from their devices, setting passwords, installing VPN software, and getting started with NorthStar Digital Literacy.

ADULT READING PROGRAMS

The "Read a Latte" Winter Reading Program ran from January 2 to February 17, 2024. To encourage sign up, we gave out library-branded camping mugs to the first 40 people who signed up. Each time patrons checked out books, they would receive a scratch-off ticket for a chance to win a prize. The tickets also served as entries into our grand prize drawings. We had 74 adults sign up for the winter reading program (nearly doubled from 2023) and 260 scratch-off tickets used (more than doubled over the previous year).

The Adult Summer Reading Program, "Adventure Begins at Your Library," was held in June-July, concurrent with the children's and teens' programs. When patrons signed up, they received a bookmark on which to keep track of their reading. Once the bookmark was completed (which meant they read five books), they would receive an entry form to enter into our drawings to win a Kindle Fire, a Shawshank Redemption adventure package or local adventure package. We had 100 adults sign up for the summer reading program, submitting 270 bookmarks.

100 BOOK CLUB

Initiated by Krystal Smalley and Rachel Keirns-Moore, the 100 Book Club is a prestigious club for readers of all ages from kindergarten up. Readers who join the 100 Book Club Challenge have the goal of reading 100 books in the year. We had 103 people sign up for the 100 Book Club in the inaugural year (June 2023-May 2024), and had 40 people complete it. While the majority of the those participating in the challenge were adults, a handful of children and teenagers completed it, as well. The successful participants were invited to attend the 100 Book Club Reception held on July 10, and received a T-shirt (sponsored by the Upper Sandusky Rotary Club) and a certificate of achievement. They also sampled a small buffet, made book recommendations, and took home free books, which had been gathered by Krystal and Rachel from the Friends of the Library sale and the donation shelf.

Readers were able to sign up for the 2024-2025 100 Book Club challenge starting June 1. We have 110 people registered, including seven library staff. Of those taking on the challenge this year, 33 completed it in the first year. By the end of 2024, five people had already completed the challenge.

We have seen an excellent response from the community over this program. Readers who completed the 100 Book Club challenge often come into the library wearing their T-shirt, and we have people talking about it on social media throughout the year. When members wear their T-shirts outside the library, many people ask about it and we have a chance to talk it up via word of mouth. This has been a bigger success than Krystal and Rachel ever envisioned.

Other adult programs included:

- Sign Language Class (3 series, totaling 13 meetings)
- Jigsaw Puzzle Contest (2 events)
- Narcan Information – Wyandot County Health Department
- The Road Less Traveled – Russel Lyon
- Cool Beans – Brad Wood
- Eclipse Viewer Workshop
- Sweet Dreams Are Made of Tea – Rachel Dornbirer
- Plant Swap (2 events, totaling 8 days)
- Posy Perfection – Shuster’s Flowers
- Wyandot Gives Back – Volunteer Opportunities for Seniors
- Pet Health 101
- K-9 Police Dog Visit and Demonstration
- Jumanji Interactive Movie
- Gourd Birdhouse Workshop
- Amazing Library Race
- American Trail Adventures – Brandon Weis
- Smokin’ Hot BBQ and Picnic – Jevon Cheney
- Jack-O-Lantern Jubilee
- S'more Party & Pumpkin Glow
- Scarecrow/Snowman Craft Workshop
- Clothing Swap (6 days)
- Treats and Sweets

SUMMARY:

Overall, an estimated 1,936 people took advantage of our adult programs this year.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Upper Sandusky Library is a 501(c)3 non-profit public charity. The Friends currently have 40 individual members and 6 family memberships. Friends participate in fund-raising, provide refreshments for library programs, help pay for library programs, and purchase materials and furniture for the library. This year they supported adult and children’s programming, in particular Mr. Molecule’s Outer Space Adventures Science Show for the Summer Reading Program and speaker Brandon Weis, author of *This is Gonna Hurt: Thru-Hiking the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, Continental Divide Trail and Arizona Trail in a Calendar Year*. The Friends’ Annual Book Sale and Santa’s Secret Store were both quite successful this year. This year, instead of having set prices for the book sale, donations were accepted. This brought in over \$2,386, exceeding receipts in 2023 by nearly 50%. The Santa’s Secret project enabled nearly 100 children to purchase inexpensive holiday gifts for friends and family. As usual, the Friends decorated the library for Christmas.

The Friends also donate board books in the Born to Read program, which works with Wyandot Memorial Hospital to distribute early literacy materials to babies and young children through local physicians' offices. They also made a donation to the Wyandot County Imagination Library, which sends a monthly book free of charge to enrolled children from birth to age five.

YOUTH SERVICES

STORYTIMES

TINY TOTS STORYTIME

Storytimes for young children are presented by Jill Stansbery. Tiny Tots StoryTime is held three times a week for children birth through age three and their adult caregivers. This program's goal is to introduce reading, sharing and getting along with children their own age while having the comfort of a parent or caregiver. Activities include stories, learning games and songs. There were 1,990 participants in 2024, averaging about 15 per session.

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME

Preschool StoryTime is held each Monday morning for children ages 3 to 6. The kids listen to stories, do finger plays and look forward to science experiments. This year 463 people attended Preschool StoryTime, an average of about 12 attendees per session.

Miss Jill also carries her storytimes to about half a dozen preschool classes each week, including Angeline, Head Start, KidzWorld, and STEPS. She visits each class an average of twice a month and rotates 25 books for the kids to enjoy during their free time. The kindergarten class at St. Peter's is also on the schedule. In about 179 visits, she reached an average of 14 children each time.

THAT THURSDAY THING

That Thursday Thing is held each Thursday afternoon during the school year for school-aged kids. We have a core group that comes to enjoy crafts, games, and of course a snack. In 2024, 272 children attended That Thursday Thing, an average of 10 students per session.

CLASS VISITS TO THE LIBRARY

First grade classes come to the library once a month from October through May. The students learn about authors and illustrators, both fiction and non-fiction. Miss Jill and Miss Lisa read stories, and they learn to do an experiment they can try at home. Students also learn how to behave in the library and how to take care of books, and they are able to check out a book to take with them.

With the library being so close to some of the schools, teachers will frequently schedule a storytime and walk their classes here. This includes the Union kindergarten classes and the special needs class from East school. The Union and East second grade classes made ornaments and decorated one of the library Christmas trees, after which Miss Jill told stories and presented an experiment.

The library was fortunate to coordinate with the Upper Sandusky Schools to have poet and author Brian Cleary present a program here. Attendees of all ages enjoyed his talk and learned about palindromes and manipulating the letters of a word.

The library is always open to going to the schools to give a program for their “Right to Read Week,” Fall Fest, after school programs, Open Houses and other activities. This usually includes distributing library material along with stories, songs, and an experiment. The library also participated in the literacy night at the KidzWorld daycare center. It is always fun to be able to promote the joy of reading!

STORYWALK®

The StoryWalk® concept was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont, and was developed with the help of Rachel Senechal, Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Our downtown StoryWalk® continues to present a new story every month. Kids are encouraged to write a code letter from each page of the book that is posted in local business windows. Upon completion, they return to the library and tell a librarian the code in order to get a prize. This helps us to know how many kids are doing the StoryWalk®.

Last year we received a grant from the McCarthy Family Fund through the Wyandot County Community Foundation to have a permanent StoryWalk® set up at Stepping Stones Park. The park department installed the frames this spring, and we held a ribbon cutting on June 3. This was very well attended by civic leaders and members of the community. Miss Jill led a group on the StoryWalk® after the ceremony. Since then we have had a number of favorable reviews of the new StoryWalk®, as well as from folks who continue to enjoy the downtown version.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOP

Our gingerbread house building workshop has become a family tradition. It is offered two evenings, with the library supplying the frame and the frosting. It is amazing how creative kids of all ages become as they transform a cardboard frame into a masterpiece. Fifty-two houses were decorated by the 80 people who attended this year.

TEEN/TWEEN PROGRAMS

STEAMPUNKS

STEAMPunks met once a month on Monday evenings from January to May. The goal was to provide opportunities for students in grades 6-12 to fulfill community service obligations by assisting at library programs and helping the staff in a variety of ways, as well as participating in monthly meetings that include fun and educational activities. One of the highlights of STEAMPunks this year was a Bigfoot program that was open to the general public. Bigfoot researcher Amy Bue told of scientific research that has gone into the search for Bigfoot. About 83 people attended STEAMPunks events in 2024.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STORYTIME AND WEDNESDAY HANG OUT

Since tweens and teens were having difficulty attending our STEAMPunks group on Monday evenings, we decided to host regular after-school events for these age groups. In August Teen/Tween Coordinator Lisa Andres began a weekly Middle School Storytime in which the kids act out different stories. They are really enjoying this and have found out how talented they are. She has also started the weekly Hangout for middle and high school kids to have a place to just “hangout” with their friends. Both groups have their “regulars,” who look forward to getting together each week.

HUB

During the school year, either Lisa Andres or Jill Stansbery presents a craft or book-themed program once a month at the HUB (“Here U Belong” – the Wyandot County youth program). Crafts and airplane making are just a few of the projects they have done with the students this year. About 74 kids participated in the programs this year.

OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMS

1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN

Seven children completed the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge in 2024.

SUMMER READING PROGRAMS

“Adventure Begins at Your Library” was the theme of our summer reading program. The elementary students in the Summer Reading Club enjoyed completing BINGO activity sheets, recording reading and other activities, and earning prizes for each BINGO, as well as an entry for the prize drawings held at the end of July. Some of the programs that we held were: “Mr. Molecule’s Outer Space Adventures Science Show,” an interactive “Wizard of Oz” movie, “Adventures with Birds and Wildlife” presented by Angie Ford, a paint party for the kids, and a Pet Show-and-Tell program with the kids bringing in their pets along with the local FFA.

Wee Read was the summer reading program for children from birth to age 3. Twenty-eight little ones participated in this program, earning a free board book for every thirty books their caregivers read to them.

The elementary reading program is for kids ages 3 through those finishing 4th grade. Seven hundred and forty-one kids participated in this program.

The high school/middle school program was for kids completing grades 5-12. Two hundred and forty-two kids participated. They received scratch-off tickets for instant prizes. Each ticket was then used as an entry to win one of the prize drawings at the end of July.

SUMMARY:

Approximate number of children’s/youth activities held at the library: 288

Total number of people participating in the activities held at the library: 6,207

Approximate number of children’s/youth activities held outside the library: 230

Total number of people participating in the activities held outside the library: 4,616

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING

The goal of social media for USCL is to inform, entertain, and engage our patrons and others about USCL and the activities and the programming we provide. In 2024 we targeted Facebook, Instagram, and Threads in our efforts, led by Marketing and Social Media Coordinator Krystal Smalley.

The library's largest platform, Facebook, continued its steady growth. Our total Facebook followers increased from 2,334 in December 2023 to 2,498 in December 2024.

The library's Instagram account continued to see growth in followers, ending the year with 569. This social media platform continues to be an area that we can improve upon, especially with Reels and videos. Instagram Stories were utilized in 2024 to showcase the library's new books each week, which has helped with follower interaction.

While we did not post new public videos to the library's YouTube channel in 2024, people continue to find older videos to watch. Notably, the videos watched have been the culinary ones posted as part of the Kids Can Cook and What's Cookin' virtual programs during the pandemic. We ended the year with 36 subscribers, 1,457 views, and 19.3 hours in watch time.

A few changes and updates were made to the library's website to stay current.

- The Book Clubs page had a makeover. The full schedules for Common Readers and Inglorious Bookworms, including links to the books, have been added, as well as the lists of past books read.
- The full 2025 holiday closing schedule has been added to the Hours and Location page.
- An "Americans and the Holocaust" page has been added to the Services tab in preparation for the exhibit in 2026.
- Graphics are being embedded on the individual pages on the website. While not visible to someone browsing the site, these images will appear when someone shares the URL on Facebook. This makes the links look more complete when shared on social media channels.

We have also integrated WhoFi, a calendar and program registration platform, into the website. The calendar portion of it was added to the website in May. It includes color-coded programs and allows staff to keep track of attendance. Online registration for select programs began in the fall. Patrons who register with their email receive confirmation and reminder emails leading up to the program. WhoFi also utilizes a waitlist that will automatically move a person from there to the sign-up list once a spot becomes available. Feedback from the patrons has been extremely positive in regard to the online registration.

WhoFi also has a Meeting Rooms calendar. Krystal set that up on the back end during December and will roll it out to the public in January. Patrons can request a meeting

room via our Meeting Rooms webpage. They will be able to see what times are available for a specific room, and will receive confirmation and reminder emails for their booking if they submit their email address. They will also be able to update or cancel their meeting themselves. Patrons can also still request a meeting room by contacting library staff by phone or email, or at the front desk.

Krystal suggests creating a Bluesky account to keep up with the trending social media accounts. People who have fled Twitter/X are now making a new home at Bluesky.

We continued to make use of the website's alerts function, which allows us to add notifications at the top of the page of closures or any other timely and important information.

In 2024, the website had 20,620 sessions. (A session is defined as the period of time a user is actively engaged with a website. All usage data, including screen views, events, etc. is associated with a session). This is an increase over last year's 19,258 sessions. Our best month regarding sessions occurred in February (2,541). We saw a total of 55,969 pageviews (pageviews are the total number of pages viewed, including repeated views of a single page) compared to 54,865 pageviews in 2023. The homepage and the calendar were the most visited pages. Our top month in pageviews was May (15,052); this could be a result of a complete update to our website.

Krystal sends press releases on a bi-monthly basis to New Vision FM, the Wyandot Chamber of Commerce, the *Daily Chief-Union*, and the *Findlay Courier*. The events get sent out once a month to Jim Stauffer for the community calendar. She also sends weekly emails to the *Daily Chief-Union* with a list of new books at USCL.

Krystal continued to meet to record an interview with New Vision FM radio station DJs on the first Tuesday of every month. She began by meeting with Jon Bowlus, and then with Caleb Carson when he took over DJ duties. The interview is aired twice a month to help promote library activities. The station also records public service announcements that Krystal sends them by email monthly.

The library's monthly newsletter, titled "Cover to Cover," is edited by Rachel Keirns-Moore. Rachel also designs posters, signs, Facebook ads and website storyblocks to promote library programming and keep the staff and public informed on what is happening at the library.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH

We received 43 requests by USCL patrons for materials not owned by any SEO library. Of these, 39 were filled.

In addition, the library responded to requests for copies of 47 obituaries from local newspaper back issues and carried out 11 historical research projects. Historical research projects this year included a fairly involved job working with the Delaware City Chapter of the DAR in locating a grave for a founder of Delaware, Ohio. His wife's grave is still in Delaware, but the husband had passed in Wyandot County and there is

no mention of his grave or burial in either Wyandot or Delaware County. Another project, much less detailed and fast to find was a notice of hearing for an adoption a little over 50 years ago. Most of the project requests have only an approximate date, so we to call them "projects," as they take more time than an average dated item, such as an obituary.

COMPUTER USAGE

The library has 10 public-use Internet computers. Patrons use these to check email accounts, surf the web, play games, create documents in MS Office applications, and make use of the Cypress resume-writing aid and NUWAV Legal Documents software, as well as accessing numerous research and hobby databases supported by the State Library of Ohio. We contract with Buckeye IT to provide security and monitoring services to increase our cybersecurity capabilities and keep the computers running well.

Average use of the library's public computers in 2024 was about 253 a month, down from 284 per month in 2023. There were 617 known sessions using the library's Wi-Fi.

MEETING ROOMS

In addition to use by the library for its programming needs, the library's meeting rooms were used 135 times by outside groups, including the Friends of the Library, Abilities in Action, Angeline School, 4-H, INFOhio, KAN DU Studio, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, North Central Ohio ESC, the Ohio Historical Society, the Ohio Mennonite Conference, Opportunities for Ohioans, the Upper Sandusky Rotary Club, Upper Sandusky Hispanic Involvement, the Upper Sandusky Schools Support Staff Union, Wyandot County Board of Developmental Disabilities, the Wyandot County Health Department, Wyandot County Historical Society, Wyandot County Prevention, Wyandot County Republicans, Wyandot County Sports Hall of Fame, Wyandot County Tracers, Wyandot Soccer Association, YMCA of Northwest Ohio, and YWCA. A number of individuals used them for meetings, homeschool testing, studying or tutoring when not in use by groups.

ELLISON ROOM

The Ellison die collection for making cutouts for signs, scrapbooking, classroom materials, etc., was used 56 times by the public, as well as for creating library programming materials and signs. In addition to USCL's own collection of dies, staff and patrons can request dies from SEO for use at our library.

SHOWCASES AND DISPLAYS

Rachel Keirns-Moore creates most of our library displays. We typically have four to six display areas, which are updated monthly to feature special programs or topical themes. Rachel also coordinates with community groups who may use the large showcase in our front vestibule to share their projects and mission. Displays by library staff in 2024 included "Our Library Rocks" (a display of crystals and gems), "Dragons in Mythology," the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse, "Barbed Wire to Butterflies" Holocaust

Survivors display, International Harry Potter Day, Banned Books Week, “ABCs of Thanksgiving,” American Indian Heritage, “Read to Remember” Veterans’ Day display, “Cozy Christmas,” and many more.

The Wyandot County Hall of Fame (February), the Wyandot County Farm Bureau (March), the Wyandot County Health Department (April), Foster Care Network (May), Open Door Resource Center (August), and the Lions Club (October) used the large display case to highlight their groups.

USC Monthly Circ Stats 2024														
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Annual Total	2023
Total CKO	8,508	7,699	7,896	8,048	7,171	8,146	8,259	8,068	7,642	8,565	7,960	7,349	95,311	96,139
SEO Outbound	2,586	2,404	2,386	2,315	2,177	2,196	2,320	2,376	2,281	2,232	2,073	2,232	27,578	30,241
Paperbacks	56	30	54	13	54	36	12	30	15	35	37	20	392	391
Puzzles	40	35	38	14	26	17	10	3	9	13	15	31	251	263
Hoopla music & video	39	17	57	46	39	37	40	29	46	47	45	54	496	69
E-Book circulation (ODL & Hoopla)	1,531	1,454	1,483	1,373	1,429	1,374	1,409	1,459	1,477	1,477	1,492	1,733	17,691	12,510
Circulation Totals:	12,760	11,639	11,914	11,809	10,896	11,806	12,050	11,965	11,470	12,369	11,622	11,419	141,719	139,742

Juvenile Circ	3,652	2,998	3,093	3,379	2,506	3,301	3,062	2,736	2,742	3,322	2,933	2,677	36,401	44,766
Days Open in Month	25	23	26	25	26	24	26	27	23	26	24	25	300	301
Average daily circ	510.4	506.0	458.2	472.4	419.1	491.9	463.5	443.1	498.7	475.7	484.3	456.8	472.4	464.3

SEO Inbound	1,933	1,882	2,032	1,944	1,844	1,892	1,876	2,000	2,112	2,257	2,077	2,158	24,007	21,718
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Borrowers as of:	2/1/24	3/1/24	4/1/24	5/1/24	6/1/24	7/1/24	8/1/24	9/1/24	10/1/24	11/1/24	12/1/24	1/1/25		
Registered Active Borrowers	2,955	2,962	2,962	2,992	2,991	2,983	2,990	2,984	2,995	2,957	2,947	2,952		
Expired Borrowers	1,880	1,908	1,928	1,938	1,985	2,029	2,054	1,019	1,112	1,195	1,237	1,264		
Total Borrowers	4,835	4,870	4,890	4,930	4,976	5,012	5,044	4,003	4,107	4,152	4,184	4,216		
New Borrowers	42	28	30	41	30	51	32	82	104	46	33	32	551	554

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Total	Previous Year
Heritage Room Use	9	18	9	11	18	18	26	25	28	15	13	9	199	151
Ellison Room Use	4	5	1	6	3	6	3	2	5	8	8	5	56	90
Meeting Rooms (non-library use)	5	7	14	13	13	6	10	17	6	17	13	14	135	201
Notary Service	6	12	6	9	8	10	10	20	5	29	12	8	135	114

Computer Usage:														
Public Access	232	303	258	272	246	228	264	324	209	230	205	217	2,988	3,342
Heritage Room	3	6	9	4	7	1	9	6	2	2	1	3	53	69
Wireless	63	62	59	116	43	35	34	40	25	69	41	30	617	904
Total - all access	298	371	326	392	296	264	307	370	236	301	247	250	3,658	4,315

Website Statistics/# Sessions	1,940	2,541	1,790	1,782	1,654	1,570	1,724	1,742	1,549	1,698	1,582	1,468	21,040	20,590
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Attendance	6,526	8,355	7,957	9,207	8,043	8,506	8,211	8,321	6,896	7,969	6,441	6,680	93,112	92,134
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Questions Answered	Directional	5,908												
	Reference	3,050	Estimates based on semi-annual counts over one week's time											