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*Jesse Butz*

Porter County Public Library  
System  
103 Jefferson St.  
Valparaiso, IN

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**BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, September 20, 2023**

**NOTICE:** The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on September 20, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items:** (Kristy)

The public comment session is provided as an opportunity for patrons to address the Board of Trustees on matters related to agenda items.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** (Kristy)

1. Approval of the Minutes from August 16, 2023 (Paul)
2. Financial Report
  - a. Treasurer's Report (Stu)
  - b. Approval of the Claims Register (Hayley)
3. Approval of Communications (Jesse)
  - a. Friend's Report
  - b. Director's Report
  - c. Patron Comments

**ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:**

1. Public Hearing for the 2024 Budget (Kristy)
2. Library Gardens Update (Jesse)
3. Horizon CD (Hayley)

Any other items  
Adjournment (Kristy)  
Signature Session

**Future Meetings: (Dates subject to change) 4:00 P.M.**

- October 18, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- November 15, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- December 13, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library

# Porter County Public Library System

## Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Sep 20, 2023

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:03 p.m. at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Kristy Merritt presided.

Members in attendance included Kristy Merritt (virtual), President; Roger Rhodes, Vice President; Paul Knauff (virtual), Secretary; Stu Summers, Treasurer; Kevin Pazour, Julie Giorgi (virtual), and Olga Granat. No board members were absent. Also in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, and Assistant Director Hayley Scott. Remote attendance was facilitated via Zoom.

### Public Comment

No public comment was given.

### Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Aug 16, 2023

Financial Report

    Treasurer's Report

    Approval of the Claims Register

Approval of Communications

    Friends of the Library Report

    Director's Report

    Patron Comments

**Motion:** Kevin Pazour moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Olga Granat.

**Discussion:** Communications reports were summarized.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

# Public Hearing for the 2024 Budget

Public hearing was opened at 4:04. No comment was given. The public hearing was closed at 4:05.

## Library Gardens Update

Updates were given on topics including meetings with Hebron neighbors and property line clarifications; Kouts fence and patio; Portage draining and piping supplies delivery, unmarked utilities, parking lot, bollards, & chimes; South Haven drainage, pathways, mushroom chimes, benches, canopy, exterior lights, & security cameras.

## Horizon CD

It was recommended to close the CD rather than renew, and place the funds in Trust Indiana, as this may allow us to take advantage of beneficial investment options that are anticipated in the near future. It was noted that the current interest rate with Trust Indiana was 5.29%, yet Horizon's quote was only for 5.25%.

**Motion:** Stu Summers moved to "close the account and move the money into Trust Indiana". The motion was seconded by Roger Rhodes.

**Discussion:** No discussion followed.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

## Adjournment

**Motion:** Stu Summers moved to adjourn. Olga Granat seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y

Meeting adjourned at 4:16 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary

# August 2023

## Overview

- August has been a challenging month as a result of the issues faced with the delivery service from the Indiana State Library. As a result of these delays, no interlibrary loan or Evergreen Indiana sharing items were able to be sent, and all materials we had already loaned out had no chance of coming back to us. Luckily for us, we have a robust internal collection and a quality collection development team that has allowed us to mitigate the inconvenience to our team. We also did small local deliveries to neighboring systems to ease the burden. All that being said, our physical circulation took a hit of 6%. While disappointing, it shows how essential the Evergreen Indiana consortium is to our patrons.
- While physical materials took a hit, electronics continued to grow and was up a cumulative 26% with ebooks being up 15% and eAudio up 38%.
- Use of the library as a gathering space continues to be strong, with meeting room usage and attendance being up. Additionally, our spaces continue to be adapted to be more welcoming and accommodate more folks working, studying, and relaxing at the library. A new teen area in Hebron and Valpo is in the works, and the Youth departments are getting new additions as well. Keep an eye out as we continue to adapt our spaces to meet the needs of our community.

## Important Upcoming Dates

- September
  - 6: Friends of the Library Board Meeting
  - 9: Valparaiso Branch Closed: Popcorn Fest
  - 20: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- October
  - 4: Friends of the Library Board Meeting
  - 18: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

## Personnel

- Ending Employment
  - Alia Dresher - Tech Services Clerk
- New Employment
  - Mary Koselke - Library Clerk, Valparaiso Branch
  - Laura Clymer - Library Clerk, Valparaiso Branch
- Staff Development
  - Ashley Montelongo, Corine Bazylyuk, Dawn Ailes, and Amy Keleman attended the ILF Youth Services Conference this year.
  - The Valpo manager team is working together to train our staff. Brittany and Madeline have been providing wonderful customer service in Circulation, and Allison recently introduced them to the Adult Services department, so that they can begin to develop Reference and technology-help skills.

- Kelleen and Kellie at the Valpo branch have been collaborating on ways to improve our volunteer coordination process. They have implemented a new system that will allow our whole team to engage with our volunteers and prepare tasks for them. The hope is that this will result in a more seamless procedure for our staff and a more rewarding experience for our volunteers.
- Missy and Riana from the Portage branch started training in the adult services department.
- Sarah and Tifani interviewed candidates for an assistant team lead position in North County.

### **Finance Notes**

- The budget benchmark for the end of August is that 66.7% of the budget should be spent. So far, 63.5% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$36,266.88 from Trust Indiana in August.
  - Included in the total interest earned is the Valpo Garden Donations, which earned \$856.77 in August.
- The audit for 2021 concluded in August with no issues and the library was commended for its good recordkeeping.
- A new Paylocity benefits module is being added that will streamline our benefits and onboarding processes while giving staff more control over the process.

### **Subscription/Contract Renewals**

- Subscriptions
  - New
    - ENA VPN - \$200
  - Renewals
    - Weiss Financial Ratings - \$3,495
    - P4A Antiques Research - \$289
  - Cancellations
    - None
- Contracts
  - New
    - Qipu - \$2,000
    - SmartDeploy - \$2,550
  - Renewals
    - Calm - \$2,160
    - Bywater Solutions - \$8,000
  - Cancellations
    - None

## **Buildings, Grounds, and Technology**

- Jason has been collecting quotes for the replacement of the Valpo garage door. The door has some issues that resulted in water entering the building.
- Valpo had a fire exit door replaced to comply with the fire code.
- The Kouts branch had some leaking in the sprinkler room this month, but thanks to staff finding it right away, it didn't get worse and there was no damage done. The fix will be in place by the middle of September.
- The Hebron Library had the building power washed this month to give it a bit of a fresh shine. Next up will be painting!
- Kouts had some issues with bats getting into the building this month. Thankfully, staff were able to direct the visiting chiroptera to the exit. Jason had Guardian Pest Control come out and see if they could figure out how they were getting in and resolve the issue.
- The South County team has worked really hard on the weeding and shifting projects in both buildings over the past month. Books are no longer on the bottom shelves, making the collection more accessible to patrons.
- All branches are working on a genre relabeling project for the CD collection making the collection much more accessible and discoverable.
- The Valpo team made a lot of progress on its collection-shifting projects this month. We are very pleased to report that the adult nonfiction shifting project is complete! This challenging project involved shifting nonfiction books and physically moving shelf heights. There are no longer any adult nonfiction books on the bottom shelves, which makes these materials more accessible and appear a bit neater as well. The adult audiobook collection shift has also been completed. The audiobooks are now on the Adult Services side of the library, with the rest of the audiovisual collection. Next up on the Valpo team's to-do list is the Young Adult collection shift, which we cannot wait to start!
- The city of Portage is doing a city-wide art installation with sculptures by artist Martha Cares. The Portage branch received a sculpture of 3 bears that is currently placed outside the front doors with plans to move to the library garden when the garden is complete.
- Work on the South Haven garden has started, they began digging the paths and working on the drainage.
- Sarah worked with Budget Blinds to order new window treatments for the Portage meeting room. Installation will happen in September.
- Nathan has been working on setting up our new patron computers. We have an intern that is assisting him with this process as well. We're planning on rolling out the new computers in Valpo first starting in October.
- Videotec installed cameras at the South Haven branch to cover the garden area. After the installation, we noticed that there is still an uncovered area so we are working with Videotech to find a resolution.
- We are looking into a small sound system for the South Haven garden as well.

- Our new Incident Reporting system is currently being configured. This will allow us to have better communication system-wide for incident reports and be more responsive to difficult patron interactions and safety issues.
- ENA finished up our internet upgrade for Portage, South Haven, Kouts, and Hebron. We're currently working with them to set up a VPN for vendor access and enhanced security in our firewall.

### **Public Relations and Marketing**

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during August was 89,759.
- Facebook:
  - Our Facebook reach was 13,986.
  - Our account has 6,319 followers.
- Twitter:
  - The System has 568 total followers. We made 5 tweets with 567 impressions this month.
- Instagram:
  - The System has 1,394 Instagram followers.
  - We shared 7 posts on Instagram with 1,236 impressions.
- YouTube:
  - The System has 141 total subscribers. Our videos had 212 views this month.
- Pinterest:
  - The System has 83 followers. Our Pinterest account's reach was 37 people for the month.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 72,284 times this month.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 808 subscribers. We posted 2 new videos and had 1,437 total views this month.
- Virtual Customer Service: Interacted with 62 patrons.
- Google: 9 new five-star reviews
  - "Nice"
  - "Clean, friendly employees"
  - "Great staff! Loved the garden!"
- Home Delivery patrons shared much gratitude with Lanette about the positive impact this library service has in their lives.
  - **Laura:** Appreciates it so much, and has told her sister to sign up. "Thank you for everything you do. You have no idea how much I appreciate this."
  - **Audrey:** "I'm unable to make it to the library and I'm so thankful for book delivery. So grateful!"
  - **Mark & Cynthia:** "We appreciate the service so much!"
  - **Marilyn:** Talks about the service with her friends, and lets them know how great it is.
  - **Daughter of Dolores:** "I know she looks forward to your visits. This has been a great resource for her. I know she enjoys the books. She worried herself a little

because she spent so much time reading...I just chuckled at the thought. Thank you for this service.”

- **Ruth:** Praises the delivery service and really likes that we offer it. She was very happy and so pleased that PCPLS offers this wonderful service for her. She has been a patron of the library since 1960. She loves the library.
- **Barbara:** “Thank you so much. I can’t begin to tell you how much this library service means to me. It has restored my love of reading!”
- **Jane:** “Thank you so much for the books you dropped off for me, they’re wonderful!”
- Jesse has been working with community leaders and the entire marketing team on internet access throughout Porter County.
- The Kouts Elementary School principal, Mrs. Teri Detering, wrote a letter thanking PCPLS Staff (Dawn, Kate, and Olivia) for attending the Kouts Back to School Night on 8/15.
- Makenna organized North County staff members Sarah, Ryana, and Jess to help out at the Portage Movie Night in the Park event where we offered a craft and a snack.
- PCPLS worked with the Indiana Department of Health to have their Mobile Unit at both the Hebron and Kouts branches for free/low-cost COVID booster shots. They would like to come back again in the fall to offer flu vaccines.
- PCPLS once again participated in the Kouts Pork Fest. The new library van got all pigged up for the parade. Word is that PCPLS had the coolest float. A big thanks to all the library staff and the Programming/Outreach team. Everyone had a great time and the library booth was a big hit, reaching families from all over Porter County. We can’t wait to do it again next year.
- The Hebron branch was very honored to be invited to be a part of the Indiana Dunes Tourism’s video project. Photos were taken and a video was shot. We can’t wait to see how it all turns out.
- Tiffani & Sandra, from the System Programming Team visited Aylesworth Elementary School on the 24th to teach a Kindergarten class about the joys of the public library! They read 3 books including 1 JUMBO book called "The Seals on the Bus".
- The System Programming Team created the new StoryWalk which was installed at the Butterfly Meadows in Valparaiso. The story, *Zachary and the Squirrel Bath*, was written by local author, Karen Hisaw.
- The System Programming Team announced all the Grand Prize Winners for the Summer Reading Program. This year’s program was a HUGE success!
- On the 22nd, Willow & Sandra, from the Community Engagement Team held a booth at Camp Collaboration. This was our 2nd year attending and allowed our team to highlight the library’s resources and events for the 0-3 age group. This was an event where other businesses and organizations could network.
- Ashley & Liz hosted a Library visit at the Opportunity Enterprise Respite House on the 31st, featuring the *Throwback Thursday Lego Club Night*. This program is part of our once-a-month visit partnership with OE.



## **Youth and Teen Services**

- Monique met with Emily, Willow, and Ashley to discuss program expansion goals for the toddler age group. We are planning to introduce a toddler playgroup, a loosely structured program that would allow kids to learn, play, and interact with their peers in a no-pressure environment.
- Liz and Steven at the Valpo branch are now assisting Emily and Corine with storytime programs. Our goal is to offer additional Book Babies programs, to meet the high patron demand for this program.
- The Community Engagement team visited each library branch to discuss plans for the upcoming Fall Festival events. The teams shared ideas about activities and event station flows.
- Sarah, Tifani, and members from the system programming team to discuss North County successes during our Summer Reading program, and how we can make the program even better next year.
- The Hebron branch had a bit of a 'goodbye to summer' bash, complete with water balloons, prizes, and a visit from the notorious Bigfoot that was seen around town all this summer.
- The Hebron branch was happy to partner with the Porter County Parks Department this month. We were all very excited to learn about nocturnal animals that live in the area. We even got to make our very own lightning bug jar. It was all very illuminating.
- Hebron had their very popular Back to School Nerf Night this month. Teens and parents had a great time at the library competing to see who had better accuracy at the 'target range'.
- PCPLS was invited to the Hebron Back to School Carnival and the Kouts Back to School Night this month. Staff brought the fun with games and smiles. We were able to reach a lot of new families as well as reconnect with our regulars coming back from vacation. We were very happy to be invited back to both next year.

## **Adult Services**

- Nikki at the Valpo branch presented her first program this August, Watercolor & Unwind. It was a huge success, with 27 attendees and glowing patron evaluations! Nikki has been working hard to train as a programmer for months, assisting Allison with our monthly Paint & Pour program. We're so excited that Nikki is leading her own painting program now!
- Allison, Monique, and Nikki at the Valpo branch have planned out what displays are going up for Fall Fest and have begun brainstorming the execution. The new display workflow for the branch has also been implemented and we already have more staff participating in the monthly displays than ever before!
- Allison at the Valpo branch worked with the IT department to update our meeting room cards. We introduced a new workflow at our most recent branch meeting, which involves indicating whether a patron requested the use of library technology (projector, smart tv,

etc.), which will allow us to better prepare to help them when they arrive. This new workflow has improved communication for room setup dramatically.

- Amanda offered her popular sewing program in North County and met with Sarah on how to expand that program to meet the demand.
- Submissions for the Senior Art Fair in Portage started this month. We are always excited about this partnership that allows community members to showcase their art throughout the building.
- PCPLS and the Northwest Indiana Literacy Council partnered to have an Art Night at the Hebron branch. Sarah M. helped to facilitate a fun time for everyone to meet, socialize, and make some really cool art.

### **Collections**

- Courier Service - In late August, the state library decided to cancel its contract with Pillow Logistics. This contract had resulted in some unfortunate service disruptions for our patrons. During this time, the collections team did a great job tracking and communicating service failures to the state library in an effort to assist them in resolving this issue. Collections staff will continue to coordinate the transition as the state resumes its relationship with the previous courier company, NOW Courier.
- Evergreen conference - Collections staff attended the Evergreen Indiana state conference in August, where the consortium's decision to adopt Aspen Discovery was announced. PCPLS staff had the opportunity to forecast some of the excellent features of this product and generate some excitement for the rest of the consortium, as well as make some valuable connections with other member libraries.
- Tablets - PCPLS received a grant enabling us to purchase children's tablets. These tablets, one of which is programmed bilingually with Spanish and English, are preloaded with entertaining educational programs. The tablets were cataloged for in-house use and can be found at our Portage and Valparaiso branches.
- CDs - The cataloging team has moved away from Dewey numbers for our music CDs, and is now using much more patron-friendly genre headings. Hebron and South Haven's partial retrofit has been completed, and the Portage branch is the current focus. We believe the genre headings will greatly improve the browsability of our audio collection.
- ECDI - In August, Elizabeth joined the Evergreen Community Development Initiative (ECDI) as one of four representatives from the Evergreen Indiana Consortium. In her first month, Elizabeth has been able to contribute to testing an upcoming Evergreen update, during which she found and reported a new bug. Joining this committee will give our library a voice in the Evergreen community and enable us to help steer the development of Evergreen ILS.

### **Genealogy**

- While we had a small turnout, Kathy did a great job with her workshop. They were interested and engaged her with many questions. We hope to offer it again in October, which is Family History Month.

- A collection of materials was donated to us by a patron who has passed away. Orlando started sorting the five bins of items, which included books, files, charts, and labeled photographs. We will check to see if the books are already in our collection, and keep those. Other items will go to the Friends.
- The DAR tour went smoothly. Several people remarked that we had more sources than they thought we did. There is another DAR meeting in September, and they asked for a morning tour that day for people who missed this one.
- We met with the team from Valparaiso Magazine. The next issue will focus on the Chamber of Commerce. Our assignment is one of their former homes, the Elks Temple, which is now Centier Bank on Lincolnway.
- We received an information request on the Noble family, their house was later owned by Colonel Gregg who was the head of the Field Museum.
- We located the burial place of Almira Fifield in Old City Cemetery. The patron who requested the info expects to visit here on September 6 to see the cemetery map.

# Valparaiso



- 1 Miss Emily and Miss Corine doing a Solar System-themed story time in the Library Rotary Garden!
- 2 Patrons had a wonderful time learning watercolor techniques and painting a lovely leaf pattern at Watercolor & Unwind.
- 3 Teens had a blast at the T-shirt Painting Program this month.
- 4 We've made a lot of progress on our collection shifting projects, and the team is feeling pretty accomplished!
- 5 Families had plenty of fun at Miss Emily's T-Shirt Painting program!

# Hebron



1

The Porter County Parks taught us about bioluminescence and how some nocturnal bugs and animals can use it.

2

Some little patrons had plenty of fun digging for prizes at the Hebron Library end of summer bash.

3

Meet Rosco Sssigler, the Hebron rock snake!

4

The Porter County Parks Department helped us make our very own lightning bug catchers.

5

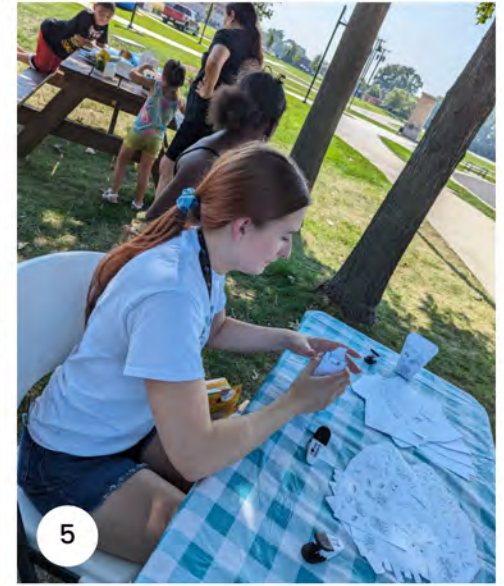
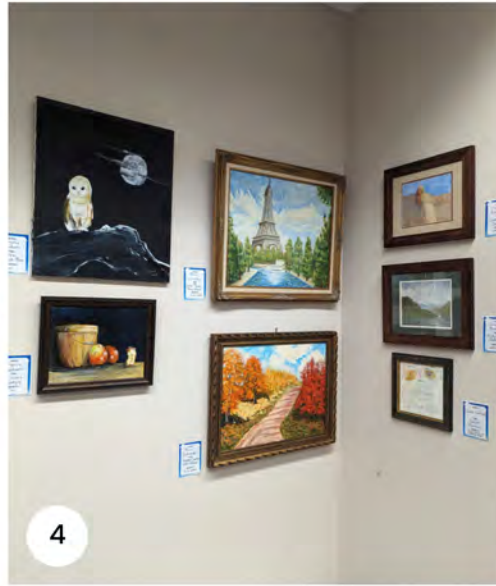
Having fun in the sun with sprinklers and water balloons at the Hebron library end of summer bash.

# Kouts



- 1 It was too hot outside for the kids to chalk the walk for Kouts Piggies and Crafts program, but they still got to make some very cute piggy pictures.
- 2 We had some amazing staff help with the Pork Fest Parade and outreach this year. Everyone was pigged up and ready to go!
- 3 Kouts made a very epic Barbie display this month. How many Barbies can you see?
- 4 Having fun at the Kouts Pork Fest. This picture was in the Chicago Tribune.
- 5 It's a very Pigeon Storytime at Kouts today. Everyone got to make their very own pigeon to take home.

# Portage



1 Portage's Anna Reeder reads to a group at Storytime in the Park.

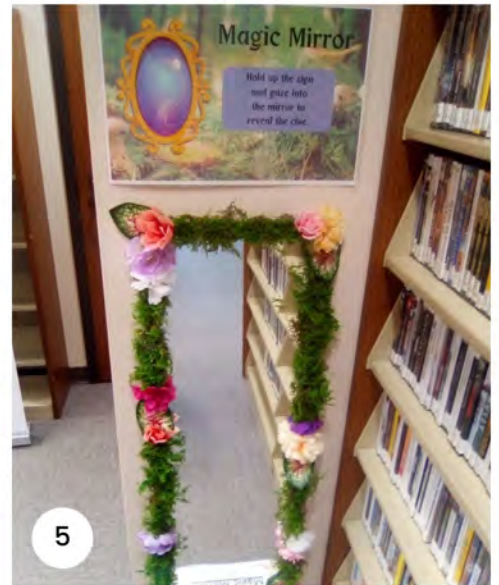
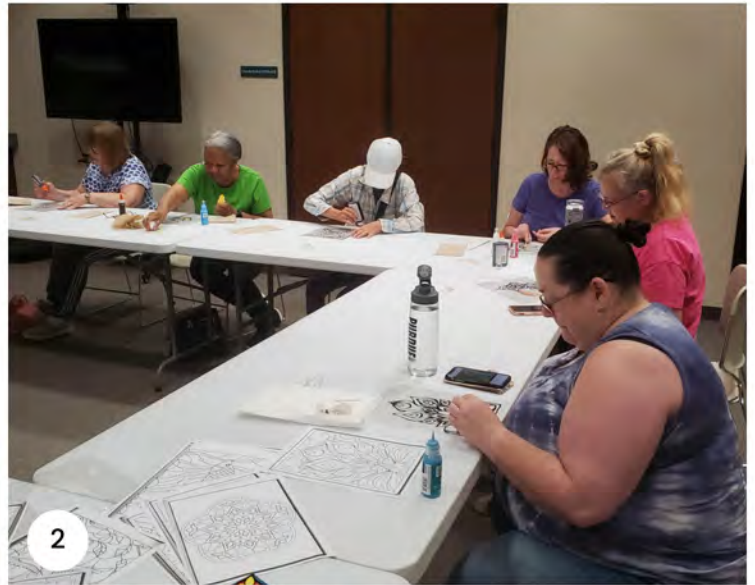
2 The City of Portage dropped off this wonderful Bears statue by artist Martha Cares.

3 We had a full house for our Back 2 School Crafternoon program.

4 Sneak peak at a few of the submissions for the Senior Art Fair

5 Ryana helps put together a craft at Movie Night in the Park.

# South Haven



- 1 Kids made firetrucks out of snacks at our firetruck program.
- 2 Stained glass art for our adult patrons was a hit – South Haven definitely has some art-lovers, clearly!
- 3 These friendly faces had a ton of fun working on a button craft!
- 4 South Haven's Tie Dye Day is always a hit for all ages!
- 5 We had a lot of fun setting up games and scavenger hunts throughout the library this summer! This Magic Mirror held one of our clues...