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**Library Director**

*Jesse Butz*

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

(219) 462-0524

pcpls.org

**BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, October 18, 2023**

**NOTICE:** The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on October 18, 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 September 20, 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. 2024 Budget Adoption (Kristy)
2. Library Gardens Update (Jesse)
3. Gutter Flashing Bid (Jesse)
4. Kouts Pump Bid (Jesse)
5. Legal Kiosk Update (Inge)

Any other items

Adjournment (Kristy)

Signature Session

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

- November 15, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- December 13, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- January 17, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library

# Porter County Public Library System

## Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Oct 18, 2023

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:03 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Paul Knauff presided.

Members in attendance included Paul Knauff, Secretary; Stu Summers, Treasurer; Kevin Pazour, Julie Giorgi, and Olga Granat. Julie Giorgi arrived at 4:05 pm. Roger Rhodes and Kristy Merritt were absent. Also in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, and Assistant Directors Inge Kokidko & Hayley Scott. Remote attendance was facilitated via Zoom.

### Public Comment

No public comment was given.

### Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Sep 20, 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 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

# 2024 Budget Adoption

Julie Giorgi arrived as this topic began. It was stated that no changes had been made to the budget since last month's hearing.

**Motion:** Julie Giorgi moved to adopt the budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Stu Summers.

**Discussion:** No discussion followed.

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

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

# Library Gardens Update

Progress was summarized for storm sewer installation, weather delays, musical features, sun-shade pricing, custom features, and storyboard trails for \$15,355.36.

**Motion:** Kevin Pazour moved to "approve that figure". The motion was seconded by Julie Giorgi.

**Discussion:** No discussion followed.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

# Gutter Flashing Bid

It was discovered that the Gutter flashing for the Hebron branch had been installed as foam, which is not Correct. After seeking multiple bids, the only one returned was Babilla for custom fabricated copper at \$15,600 to both fabricate and install .

**Motion:** Olga Granat moved to "approve that bid". The motion was seconded by Julie Giorgi.

**Discussion:** No discussion followed.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

# Kouts Pump Bid

The Kouts pumps are original to the building, leaking and having problems. As they are well past life expectancy, replacement is recommended. Gatlin had the lowest bid by about \$7,000 at \$18,750.

**Motion:** Olga Granat moved to approve. The motion was seconded by Kevin Pazour.

**Discussion:** No discussion followed.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

## Legal Kiosk Update

The use of the legal kiosk was summarized. The board requested additional information and to revisit this topic at the next meeting to decide if the service agreement should be renewed.

## Adjournment

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

**Vote:** The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:26 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary

# **September 2023**

## **Overview**

- September was a challenging month as our Evergreen transit system was still experiencing issues that impacted our physical circulation. Despite those challenging circumstances our circulation was only down 7%.
- As per our trends, electronic circulation was up 37% and helped our overall circulation grow by 9% for the month.
- Our programming and marketing team continues to drill down and focus our efforts on impactful offerings. Overall we offered only 33% more programs yet had 42% more attendance.
- Our IT team has been working hard to create a tech experience that meets and exceeds our patrons' expectations. They are in the process of rolling out new Windows-based patron machines while also exploring options to increase access to the internet and technology at home.

## **Important Upcoming Dates**

- November
  - 1: Friends of the Library Board Meeting
  - 15: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

## **Personnel**

- Ending Employment
  - Connie Murphy, May 2010 - September 2023
- New Employment
  - None
- Staff Development
  - Monique held the first of what will be monthly touch base meetings with the members of the Valpo management team. These have given each Team Lead the opportunity to share ideas, feedback, concerns, and questions. The information gleaned from this first round of meetings has been invaluable already. We look forward to continuing to learn from each other and improve our communication.
  - North County started staff training meetings this month. The goal of these training sessions is to go over the details of very specific work processes and allow staff to ask workflow-related questions. This month's topic was homebound delivery processing and digital professionalism.

## **Finance Notes**

- The budget benchmark for the end of September is that 75% of the budget should

be spent. So far, 69.4% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.

- The Library earned \$35,605.79 from Trust Indiana in September.
  - Included in the total interest earned is the Valpo Garden Donations, which earned \$841.15.
- During September, Hayley worked with our procurement vendor, Spendbridge on pricing for increased services that will continue to make the processing of accounts payable even more efficient. As PCPLS is one of the first libraries in the state to fully integrate with Spendbridge, we will be working with them in the coming year to create a case study to present at the annual ILF conference.
- Hayley and Jesse have engaged with an insurance firm to assess our risk regarding our non-employee benefit insurance areas. This will take place over the next few weeks.

### **Subscription/Contract Renewals**

- Subscriptions
  - New
    - None
  - Renewals
    - World Book Online - \$3,080.84
  - Cancellations
    - None
- Contracts
  - New
    - Spendbridge - \$7,800
  - Renewals
    - Collection HQ - \$19,163
    - Collection HQ ESP - \$9,581
    - Sensource - \$1,512
  - Cancellations
    - None

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

- The Kouts branch had a flood emergency at the start of the month. One of the family toilets in YS started to dump water into the YS area. Kouts staff, along with Jesse, Inge, and JJ, were able to get the flood stopped, contained, and cleaned up, losing only a few books and outlets to water damage. The entire team went above and beyond to minimize the disruption.
- Jesse met with the Portage team regarding the Portage Library Garden. While slightly behind at this point as a result of material delays and locating services, progress continues to be made.
- Jesse, Jason, and Sarah met to plan out features for the South Haven garden.
- Jason and Aiden have been moving shelving in the Valpo branch and cleaning out the basement for future development.

- Jason and Aiden have been doing tree and bush maintenance at the branches.
- Shambaugh finished repairs on the Kouts sprinkler system.
- Hebron's window that had rotted out was replaced this month. Now the study room window can be opened and closed.
- This month the Hebron library got its fascia repainted, giving the building a bit of a facelift. The painters did a phenomenal job. While conducting the repair they uncovered an issue with the copper that will need to be addressed.
- In September, IT was preparing the final steps to replace all our patron computers in October. These will all be Windows machines, which are much more familiar to the public and usually more relevant for the development of job skills. This is a big project that requires a lot of testing, but our team is well-prepared to carry this out!
- IT has also been working on getting our new incident reporting site ready to use. This will allow us to share information that is important for staff safety in a timely and efficient way. We should be ready to roll this out system-wide in November.

### **Public Relations and Marketing**

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during August was 79,153.
- Facebook:
  - Our Facebook reach was 11,720.
  - Our account has 6,360 followers.
- Twitter:
  - The System has 567 total followers. We made 4 tweets with 346 impressions this month.
- Instagram:
  - The System has 1,407 Instagram followers.
  - We shared 6 posts on Instagram with 1,159 impressions.
- YouTube:
  - The System has 142 total subscribers. Our videos had 64 views this month.
- Pinterest:
  - The System has 83 followers. Our Pinterest account's reach was 27 people for the month.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 65,174 times this month.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 841 subscribers. We had 663 total views this month.
- Virtual Customer Service: Interacted with 54 patrons.
- Google: 2 new five-star reviews
- Jesse has been attending webinars regarding broadband equity and inclusion from various state agencies over the last month. He also met with Comcast to discuss options for further engagement at the local level.
- PCPLS partnered with the League of Women Voters of Porter County. Volunteers from the League came to each branch to help promote voter registration and inform patrons of the upcoming local elections.
- PCPLS was invited to have a booth at the South Shore Roller Derby bout in downtown Valpo this month. It was a fun day and the staff were able to talk with a lot of people, spreading the word about our upcoming Fall Fests and all the amazing services we offer.

Did you know that there are several current and former PCPLS staff members in the local derby league?

- PCPLS once again was invited to participate in the Kouts Elementary School PTO Fall Fest. Staff were able to talk to a lot of families that didn't know about all the amazing programs and services that the library provides.
- PCPLS staff were thrilled to be invited again this year to the Kouts Elementary School Book Tasting. Dawn A., Amy K., and Cindi H. were able to introduce some tasty new books to very enthusiastic kids. It was a lot of fun.
- The System Programming Team installed a new story in the Valparaiso Rotary Library Garden in early September. The story featured this fall season is *Just Read* by author Lori Degman.
- Our Outreach team hosted a fun-filled booth at Portage's Bacon Fest, complete with a book sale area, raising funds for the Friends of the Library.
- At this year's Popcorn Fest, our booth was visited by thousands of people, and we had a fantastic time getting the word out about our annual Fall Fests and Fall Reading Challenge.
- The Annual PCPLS Fall Reading Challenge began on the 13th. This program is geared towards all ages and is run through our Beanstack app. In September, we have received 289 new registrations and 80 completions.
- At Valparaiso's World Cultural Festival, our Outreach team offered a craft encouraging patrons to paint a rock with a representation of themselves or their culture to later be featured on display in the Rotary Library Garden.
- PCPLS held the Fix-it-Fair at the Valparaiso Branch on the 23rd, in partnership with the Recycling & Waste Reduction District of Porter County. It was a fantastic turnout and many patrons were delighted to walk away with items repaired.
- The Annual PCPLS Fall Festivals began with South Haven on the 20th and Hebron on the 27th. The festivals included crafts, games, prizes, and more. We received food donations for these events from Casey's in Valparaiso and Casey's in Hebron. We were excited to have the Snowie Food Truck at South Haven. In Hebron, we had a Little Blue Truck Storytime with a special visit from an actual Blue Truck! We received wonderful feedback from patrons for both of the events.
- Ashley hosted a Library visit at the Opportunity Enterprises Respite House on the 28th, featuring an Introduction to the library and upcoming Fall Festival including a fall festival craft. This program is part of our once-a-month visit partnership with OE.

### **Youth and Teen Services**

- Corine presented a new program at the Valpo branch called Science Kids, which is a super fun program for kids that are 9-12 years old. The kids have four stations to do experiments. At each Science Kids station, they explore all different kinds of science from Physics and Chemistry to Life Science. The stations change for each month's program. Even though the program is once a month, it offers the opportunity for fun new experiments without repetition and is adaptable to the seasons.
- The Valpo team worked together on a plan to expand its Book Babies program since it always has a long waitlist. We plan to offer this program twice on the same day starting



in November. This will allow more patrons to attend while keeping the program size manageable.

- The Hebron branch recently started up a new Book Babies program. Hebron has a lot of patrons with very young children who will benefit greatly from the early childhood literacy activities that make up the new program, which includes reading, singing, and STEM-focused play.
- Hebron had an amazing turnout for their Tiny Foods teen program this month. Teens learned how to make bite-sized tasty treats and then had some silly fun with a 'tiny-hands' relay race and challenges.
- Lego Club in Kouts continues to be one of our biggest programs next to Mother Goose on the Loose. From super towers to future space cars, everyone created something amazing.
- The Hebron branch partnered this month with the Hebron Middle School and High School to display some of the amazing artwork created by students.

### **Adult Services**

- Now that the adult nonfiction collection has been finished at the Valpo branch, the team is getting back into the routine of keeping the area clean and organized by keeping up on their shelf-reading and magazine maintenance.
- September was another display transition month at the Valpo branch. Allison and the team took down all the summer reading displays across the branch and replaced them with more seasonal scenes. Monique, with help from Courtney and Allison, tackled the stairwell landing creating a pumpkin patch. Allison brought back the singing critters for the lobby, and Nikki created a cute animal reading display in YS. Nikki and Allison worked with marketing to try out a new display approach utilizing the scanner and larger printer to create bigger backdrops/images. This route offers a lot more possibilities with display work across the branch!
- Portage's Senior Art Fair reception had over 80 attendees. We hosted 53 artists and their artwork throughout the month of September.
- With the big weeding and shifting projects mostly over in South County, the staff is focusing on shelf reading and maintaining the stacks. They are also still working with Tech Services on the CD genre project.
- It is time for fall in both South County branches. In preparation for the Fall Fests, staff went all out to decorate and make the branches feel like Autumn. Staff also made several fantastic displays celebrating Latinx Heritage.
- The South County team has worked really hard on the weeding and shifting projects in both buildings over the past month. Hebron has finished both weeding and shifting in YS and Adult Services. Kouts just has a bit more to go in the Non-Fiction section.
- The Valpo team continues to make progress on its collection-shifting goals. The Young Adult collection has now made its way to its new home! The Science Fiction/Fantasy collection has also been shifted to its final location. Next up for the team is to replace the shelving units near the public meeting rooms so that the Large Print collection can be moved.

- North County worked on genre label changes in the CD collection at both South Haven and Portage.

### **Collections**

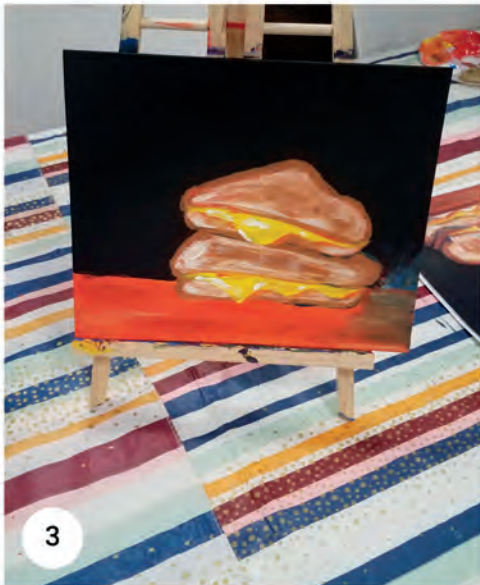
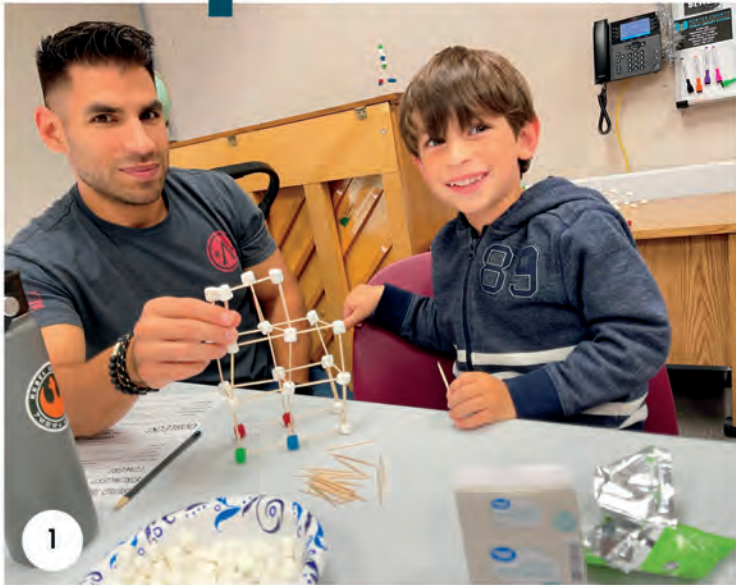
- High-low - The Collections team has completed our addition of “high interest-low vocabulary” books to our young adult and children’s collections. These materials are designed to assist struggling readers and those interested in fostering literacy skills among our younger patrons and are especially important to address reading skills gaps as a result of the pandemic.
- Axis360 - Since joining the IDL consortium, the digital resource Libby has grown popular faster than expected. Due to this and Libby’s ease of use for patrons and staff, we have sunsetted the Axis360 app whose use has been declining in recent years. This ensures that we can focus more on the growing patron demand for e-content. We are working towards the goal of reaching 100% purchasing of requested e-materials in 2024, and are excited by the prospect of satisfying the patron demand for the growing collection.
- Music CDs - Our catalogers have made great strides in converting our CD collections to reflect music genres in a way that is more patron-friendly. Jackie has developed a plan and is mobilizing branch staff to retrofit materials, and this is now underway. This CD project is the Collection team’s first step to genrefying our materials with the goal of creating a better experience and ease of understanding of our collections for our patrons.
- Equinox Reports - Inge and Elizabeth continue to work in conjunction with Evergreen and Equinox to develop better reporting for our system. Most recently, Elizabeth worked 1-on-1 with Equinox to develop reports necessary for ensuring that our patron hold requests are fulfilled in a timely manner and that our financial team and Collections team are in sync in regard to invoices paid. This has helped smooth out our acquisition process to be more efficient and focused.
- InfoExpress Update - PCPLS has been receiving regularly scheduled pickups and deliveries. There is still a backlog of materials, however, we see clear progress. Jackie and Elizabeth have been receiving updates from the State Library and communicating these updates with staff.

### **Genealogy**

- We had a good visit with a patron who is a relative of Almira Fifield. She made some good connections with Steve Shook, Porter County Genweb administrator, and Kevin Pazour, County Historian. She was able to visit Old City Cemetery and walk around to find family burial sites. She lives in North Carolina and has done lots of research to get Almira a military cemetery marker, and possibly a state historical marker here.
- We were able to give suggestions to a patron who is dealing with two generations of adoptions.
- Another DAR tour occurred on Tuesday, 19 September. There were 10 attendees this time.
- Mondays are typically our busiest days. One week we had over ten patrons, all in the morning.

- Our team searched for records of a farm in Union Township for a couple who came here from Illinois.
- We collected photographs and memorabilia for the Gesse family that were sent by a descendant.
- Chris met with a Thune family descendant who came here for her high school reunion. She visited from Florida for a long weekend.
- Our team was excited to search for Popcorn Fest themes and was able to share those with the Valparaiso Events office. They discovered that we had more of a list than they did!
- We worked on a question from Valparaiso City Communications on the bricks used on Valparaiso Street. The bricks there were reused from Lincolnway about 1928.
- The team started researching 9 Franklin St. for the current owner. It appears to have been an early grocery store, then a restaurant, a men's clothing store, and a jewelry store.

# Valparaiso



- 1 Patrons working together to build the tallest marshmallow and gumdrop tower in Corine's Science Kids program!
- 2 Patrons creating something cool at the Morning Lego Club!
- 3 Attendees enjoyed recreating Allison's artwork for the September Paint & Pour program, "Crispy Grilled Cheese". Here you can see a patron's work.
- 4 The Young Adult collection has moved to its new spot at the Valpo branch!
- 5 Nikki worked with the marketing team to enlarge and print her artwork. Lots of patrons have been posing for this photo-op!

# Hebron



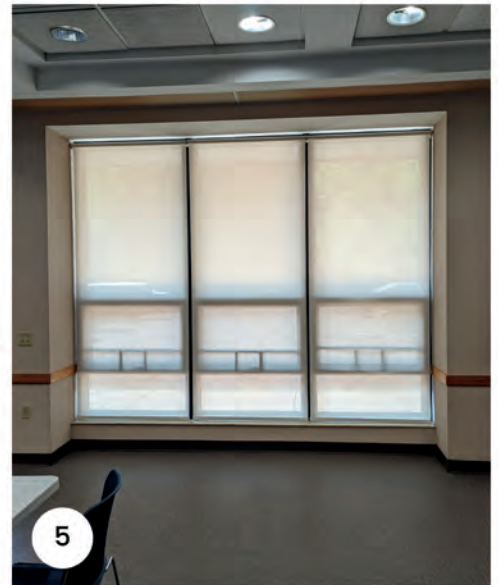
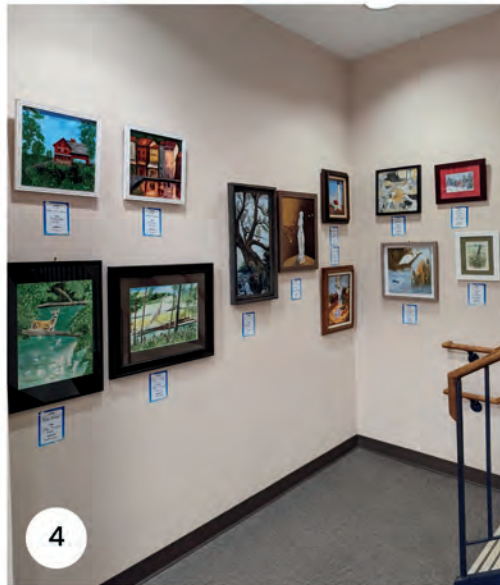
- 1 Step right up and see if you can knock the discs down. We had a lot of fun at the Hebron Fall Fest.
- 2 What do miniature pancakes, 'tiny hands', and the cutest house-mouse you've ever seen have in common? Our Tiny Foods Teen Program!
- 3 Showing off amazing donut art at our Cookies and Canvas program.
- 4 We thoroughly enjoyed the company of Caleb, the K-9 comfort dog as we gathered around our library 'campsite' to read stories.
- 5 We started our new book babies program this month and it's been a blast! Littles have fun reading, singing, and doing STEM-focused play.

# Kouts



- 1 What kind of rock will you make to add to our library rock snake? These kids are having fun and getting messy.
- 2 These future architects are having fun making their own amazing creations at the Kouts Lego Club.
- 3 We had a lot of fun this month decorating the storytime room with apples.
- 4 Shake those shakers! It's storytime in Kouts!
- 5 In storytime this week, we were learning about colors with these fun little fish.

# Portage



- 1 We had over 80 guests attend the Senior Art Fair reception.
- 2 Art from a few of the artists displayed in our Senior Art Fair Exhibition.
- 3 Art of all shapes, sizes and mediums were a part of this month's exhibition.
- 4 More fun creations submitted for the Senior Art Fair.
- 5 We purchased new blinds for the meeting room.

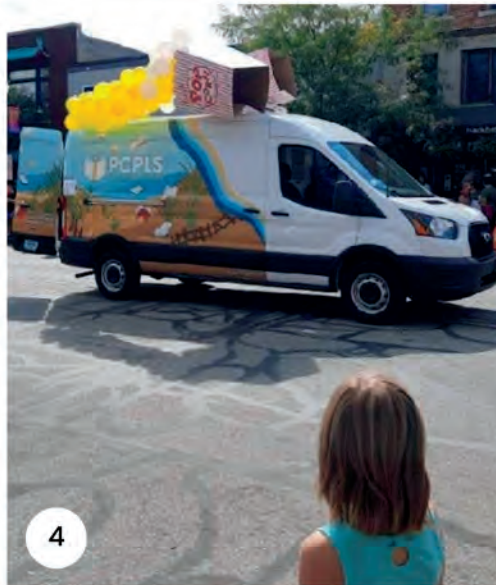
# South Haven



- 1 Craft tables were a popular station at the South Haven Fall Fest!
- 2 We received compliments from patrons that our wooded area is looking nice and that they love that they can see the library from the street.
- 3 Staff enjoy the changing of seasons and pulling out fall decorations.
- 4 Mushroom tops from Garden Play Equipment started to be delivered. They look great!
- 5 Willow greeting patrons at the welcome desk for South Haven's Fall Fest.



# in Our Community



- 1 A big thank you to the South Shore Roller Derby for inviting us to their event. We had a lot of fun meeting new people.
- 2 PCPLS participated in this year's Bacon Fest. Sandra and Aloma enjoyed talking up the library and helping Portage learn more about our resources.
- 3 We had a fun time at the Kouts School PTO Fall Fest again this year. Everyone loved the fall themed temporary tattoos.
- 4 Our new maintenance van had its Valparaiso debut in the Popcorn Festival Parade.
- 5 At the Valparaiso International Center's World Cultural Festival, attendees decorated rocks to be displayed in the Valparaiso Rotary Library Garden.