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Clay Patton

Library Director

Jesse Butz

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

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pcpls.org

BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, February 21, 2024

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on February 21, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

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:

1. Approval of the Minutes from January 17, 2023
2. Financial Report
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Approval of the Claims Register
3. Approval of Communications
 - a. Friend's Report
 - b. Director's Report
 - c. Patron Comments

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

1. 2023 Year in Review
2. Approval of Annual Report
3. Valpo Renovation Update
4. 2024 Non-Resident Fee
5. Personnel Policy Manual Update
6. Paving and Concrete for South Haven and Hebron

Any other items

Adjournment

Signature Session

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

- March 20, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- April 17, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- May 15, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Feb 21, 2024

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:01 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Kristy Merritt presided.

Members in attendance included Kristy Merritt, president; Roger Rhodes, vice president; Stu Summers, treasurer (remote); Kevin Pazour, Julie Giorgi, and Olga Granat. Paul Knauff, secretary, arrived late at 4:06 pm. No board members 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 Jan 17, 2024

Financial Report

 Treasurer's Report

 Approval of the Claims Register

Approval of Communications

 Friends of the Library Report

 Director's Report

 Patron Comments

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

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized. Paul Knauff arrived during this time.

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

2023 Year in Review

Marketing staff was introduced, and the Annual Impact Report for 2023 was summarized.

Approval of Annual Report

The Indiana State Library annual report process was summarized, including efforts to standardize and simplify the process by the state library. During this time, some questions were asked about financial totals in the previous report, the Annual Impact Report, and clarified.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to approve the annual report. 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

Valpo Renovation Update

Preliminary renovation plans and budgetary quotes from Bill Gorski for the Valparaiso branch were summarized. The initial estimates came in much higher than expected at over 12 million dollars. Discussions to adjust the scope and scale of the project have reduced the cost to between 5 and 6 million, depending on options. Conversations to focus the project and reduce potential costs as much as possible will continue.

2024 Non-Resident Fee

The minimum rate for the nonresident fee has increased from \$38.70 to \$41.61.

Motion: Paul Knauff moved to approve the new rate. The motion was seconded by Kevin Pazour.

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

Personnel Policy Manual Update

Updates to the Personnel Policy Manual were summarized, including the use of SHRM, the state library, and other model libraries.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to approve the proposed Employee Handbook. The motion was seconded by Olga Granat.

Discussion: No discussion followed the motion.

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

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

Paving and Concrete for South Haven and Hebron

Requests for quotes for paving and concrete projects were summarized. Project options, competing quote costs, timelines for paving projects, and reimbursement possibilities were discussed. Estimates for South Haven were in the \$80,000-\$90,000 range, but if using an alternate process from the initial specs, it would be in the \$35,000 to \$45,000 range.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to approve the requests for quotes. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

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: Olga Granat moved to adjourn. Julie Giorgi seconded the motion.

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

Meeting adjourned at 4:54 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary

January 2024

Overview

- January is always filled with year-end project wrap-ups and reports. Our team works on the annual report to the State Library, the Annual report to the SBOA, and our personal favorite, the annual year in review. While each report has its place, the annual year in review really goes above and beyond to tell the story of how impactful the library has been in our community. This document recognizes the hard work and dedication of our team and volunteers as well as partner organizations that have done so much to help PCPLS be the innovative cornerstone of the community it has become.
- Our leadership team has been working on strategic goals, one of which is quarterly department status updates. These updates help to focus our team strategically on the larger goals and metrics that indicate success.
- While our physical circulation and door count were both down in January as a result of the winter weather, our electronic resources had an extremely strong showing at over 13% higher than the previous year. At the current rate, e-circulation should eclipse total physical circulation in the next few months! Our collections team has adapted our purchasing accordingly. Being part of the Evergreen and Indiana Digital Library consortiums allows us to adapt our spending to meet the needs of our patrons without sacrificing potential titles for our patrons.

Important Upcoming Dates

- February
 - 7: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 21: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- March
 - 6: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 20: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - None
- New Employment
 - Matthew Wheeler - Custodian
- Staff Development
 - The Valparaiso Police Department provided an Active Shooter training for the Valparaiso branch on January 26th.

- Monique and Kellie conducted interviews for the part-time Library Assistant position at the Valparaiso branch.
- Monique is exploring the feasibility of enrolling staff in a Mental Health First Aid training course provided by Geminus.
- Jesse and Amy worked to establish our electronic onboarding system and were able to successfully onboard our first new employee, saving hours of staff time and streamlining the entire process.
- Jesse met with Organizational Development Solutions on a new FMLA and ADA procedure that should simplify the process and remove the burden from our Management team.

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of January is that 8.3% of the budget should be expended. So far, 5.8% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$34,363.19 from Trust Indiana in January. Included in the total interest earned is the Mills Trust donation, which earned \$3,082.99
- Not only is January the Annual Reporting Marathon, but it is also open enrollment time. Amy and Hayley implemented a more efficient and accurate process for open enrollment through Paylocity and the library had 100% of its staff complete the process!

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - Value Line - \$5,225.00
 - Renewals
 - Engaged Patrons \$245.00
 - Cancellations
 - None
- Contracts
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - Johnson Controls - \$8,715.00
 - Cancellations
 - None

Buildings & Grounds

- The Valpo branch had one of the new pump motors go bad. Unfortunately, this occurred just outside of the warranty period and will require repair.

- Jason has been working with Johnson Controls on temperature control settings. Jason was able to discover that our settings have been off for years and work towards getting them dialed in correctly.
- The Hebron branch had a front door issue that required the replacement of the locking mechanism.
- Jason worked with Jesse, Sarah, and Monique to roll out new cleaning checklists for North County and Valpo. The updated procedures will ensure an efficiently cleaned space that takes advantage of our branch workforce as well as the maintenance team.
- Jason and Aiden took down the Holiday decorations in record time this year, stowing them away and prepping for spring.
- A huge shoutout to our maintenance and branch teams for fighting off the winter storm this month! Teams were out shoveling and salting the area to ensure a safe experience for our patrons.
- Jason and Aiden installed the first of many musical features at our South Haven Garden... Musical stepping stones!
- The new fence was installed at the South Haven Garden!
- The Portage Garden has been in a slower phase, but the warmer weather has allowed them to work on prepping for sidewalks and concrete work to occur in February.
- Jason identified a leak in the roof at both Portage and Kouts. We are working on the specs for a roof replacement to happen later this year for Kouts and Portage.
- Additional trees have been removed at South Haven and Portage. This will drastically reduce maintenance issues related to the gutter system and aid in the installation of the fence in South Haven.
- Jesse met with a green energy consultant to review possible options related to EV, solar, and charging stations.

Technology

- Nathan assisted with our first “Tech for Beginners” program this month. We had some good feedback that we are taking into consideration for future tech training programs.
- We started looking into streaming our board meetings on YouTube to comply with the new law that requires government agencies to live-stream all public meetings. One of the first changes will be to shift from Zoom to Google Meet for our remote meeting platform for board meetings.
- Angela has been working with our Google account manager to update the license to enterprise standard and started implementing some of the new features, such as

restricting off-site email usage for all non-exempt staff and creating an automated retention plan for our Gmail and Drive files.

- The Admin and Systems teams met with the new web development company to begin planning out our new website, calendar, and room reservation system. The process should take about 6 months but the team we have to work is up to the challenge!

Public Relations and Marketing

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during November was 79,416.
- Facebook:
 - Our Facebook reach was 19,533.
 - Our account has 6,564 followers.
- Twitter:
 - The System has 574 total followers. We made 5 tweets with 386 impressions this month.
- Instagram:
 - The System has 1,442 Instagram followers.
 - We shared 13 posts on Instagram with 1,934 impressions.
- YouTube:
 - The System has 144 total subscribers. Our videos had 190 views this month.
- Pinterest:
 - The System has 83 followers. Our Pinterest account's reach was 25 people for the month.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 56,706 times this month.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 865 subscribers. We had 642 total views this month.
- Virtual Customer Service: Interacted with 47 patrons.
- Google: 8 new five-star review
- System Programming received donations from Meijers for \$625.00 to go towards refreshments for upcoming events at PCPLS.
- Jack L. attended the Town of Hebron's comprehensive plan meeting, making sure that the library had a presence while the town was discussing some very important decisions concerning its future.

- Willow Cataldo and Ashley Montelongo met with the Porter County Parks Department to discuss our upcoming events as a part of our partnership. There was a verbal agreement to encourage one another on cross-promotion.
- Jesse met with the Valpo Parks Department Director to discuss partnership possibilities. An exciting idea was started to help expand programming partnerships with multiple organizations throughout Porter County.
- Willow and Makenna initiated the development of a new PCPLS app and passed the project on to the collections team for further testing.
- Makenna and Ashley represented PCPLS at the Nitco Business Bash, building valuable connections with local organizations.
- Makenna condensed our Annual Impact Report and refreshed the layout to better highlight all we do for our community.
- Ashley and Makenna met with the programming team at each branch to continue to align programming and marketing strategies across all five library branches, creating a cohesive and impactful experience for our patrons.
- Jesse and Olga met with a Valpo school Principal to form a partnership to support Spanish-speaking families in the area. Our team looks forward to growing this partnership.
- Makenna, Willow, and Jesse have been meeting about the Marketing Strategy plan. This comprehensive plan is unusual for a Library setting but will allow our team to be much more proactive in regard to our marketing.
- Jesse met with Comcast and Surf Internet to keep moving forward on the broadband initiative.

Youth and Teen Services

- The Winter Flurries Reading Challenge officially ended on January 31st with a total of 371 participants of which 1,374 activities were completed and 130,504 minutes were read.
- Winter Reading Weekly Raffle Participants: ****Week 4-**575 tickets (\$50 Michael's Giftcard & Crochet Snowman kit); **Week 5-**456 tickets (Kerig & \$25 Target Gift Card); **Week 6-**515 tickets (Popcorn maker and popcorn seasoning variety pack) **Week 7-**516 tickets (Bluey Bundle)
- Ashley Montelongo and Sandra York attended a virtual meeting with several local NWI programming Librarians. It was a performer discussion meeting, where Ashley and Sandra shared and received feedback regarding recommended (and not so much recommended) SRP performers.

- In preparation for the Summer Reading Program, the system programming team has booked Smarty Pants Balloon Enthusiast, Scribble Monster Performer, and 2 Storytime at the Airport Visits. We are ahead of the game this year!
- The System Programming team selected Solar Eclipse-themed books for the Valpo Garden and Sunset Hills spring Storywalks. Last year's FireFly Award winner, *The Good Place* by Lucy Cousins was selected for Sunset Hill's Summer selection to promote the 2024 Firefly Awards. *I'm Not Small* by Nina Crews was selected by the team for the Garden's summer book.
- Valparaiso held the 1st Books Balls and Blocks event at Valparaiso Public Library and had 24 participants attend. This program is in partnership with the Porter County Community Foundation. The purpose is to create a space for an inclusive play group, connect parents with other parents, as well as connect them with child development milestones experts and resources to demystify this process a bit, as well as answer questions, discuss concerns, connect with referral sources, etc.
- Ashley Montelongo and Sandra York hosted a Book a Librarian Visit with homeschooled freshmen to discuss *How to start a Research Paper*. It was an overview of all the resources, looking deeper at Inspire to find work-cited materials, and exploring our catalog and shelves in-house for more information.
- Sandra York hosted Storytime in the Park with Amy Keleman from NoCo as her helper. 7 kids and 3 adults were in attendance as they listened to stories, sang songs, and played in activities all surrounding trains.
- Sandra York held a Nail Art Program at the Portage Branch, 40 people braved the weather and painted polar bears on their nails.
- Sarah Geer and Willow created a plan to offer Sensory Friendly hours at the South Haven branch for Autism Awareness Month in April.
- Steven, Monique, and Allison conducted a merchandising walkthrough of the Valparaiso Youth Services department. Steven has already begun coordinating projects to get the department updated, organized, and looking great!
- The Bluey Party at the Valpo branch was well thought out and a lot of fun! There were different stations set up for the kids to visit: A Make Your Own Bluey Party Hat, a Bingo Mask station, a Coloring sheets station, games, and of course snacks! The team also taught the kids how to play their version of Hot Potato called "Pass the Bluey" where they took turns passing around an 11-inch Bluey stuffie. When someone was "out," they got a special sticker. The team also had a Bluey Scavenger Hunt throughout the whole Branch, which the kids loved! They got a little paw print stamper as a prize. Kudos go to Emily for planning this, and to Corine, Liz, and Allison for assisting on the day of. And a special thanks goes to Allison who painted the Bluey and Bingo cardboard cutouts for the photo wall.

- The Hebron branch had the local Daisy Girl Scout Troop come for a library visit. There was a story, some silly songs sung, and everyone got a bit messy making their own animal track stamps. On the whole, everyone had a great time and would like to plan more library visits in the future.
- The Block Block Walk-in program in Hebron was a great success. Patrons, young and old, had a lot of fun building and creating with this fantastic resource. Everyone who attended asked when we planned to do this program again.
- The new teen art program at the Hebron branch, Thirsty Palette, brought in the teens this month. Participants got to flex their art skills using multiple modes of mediums, including paint, oil pastels, colored pencils, yarn art, and more to create a mixed-media snowflake. Everyone had a good time and are excited for this to continue.
- The Kouts Branch Lego Club continues to be one of the most popular kids' programs. Several of the kids have impressive ongoing projects that they are working on. There are several display cases full of amazing Lego creations.
- The Kouts branch partnered with the Kouts Elementary School's third grade this month, to display their amazing art based on the book Hundertwasser: The House of the Happy Spirits by Geraldine Elschner and Lucie Vandevelde. The art reception, hosted by the library, was well attended by the families of these amazing artists. Everyone was thankful that the library was able to continue this partnership and can't wait to see what the students of KES make next.
- South County had their new interactive play wall panels installed this month and the kids are loving them. Several parents have commented on how happy they are for the library to be able to have things like this for their children to interact with.

Adult Services

- The AARP TAX Help rooms are booked and appointment slots are ready to begin this year's tax season at the Valparaiso, Portage, and Kouts branches.
- Ashley Montelongo presented an Introduction to the Library program at the new OE Camp Lakeside for Respite.
- The Valparaiso team is very proud to say the Fiction shifting project is officially finished! The graphic novels and manga were moved to the newly opened shelves along the far wall. Hopefully, soon we'll get the window shelves taken down to open up a new seating area!
- The Valparaiso team has been navigating the challenges and changes to tax season well. Although this can be a stressful time, many staff members are exhibiting great customer service skills and kindness. Stephanie and Brittany have consistently shown a kind steadfastness at the desk; and even though they have just begun training in Adult Services, Mary and Lori have also been going above and beyond with hands-on

assistance. And always, we have been able to rely heavily upon John and Dawn for their continued outstanding work and dependability.

- PCPLS partnered again this year with the NWI Volunteer Lawyers for our popular Talk To a Lawyer program. We are glad that we can continue to offer this public service on Martin Luther King Jr. Day in honor of his legacy, to increase equitable access to legal services.

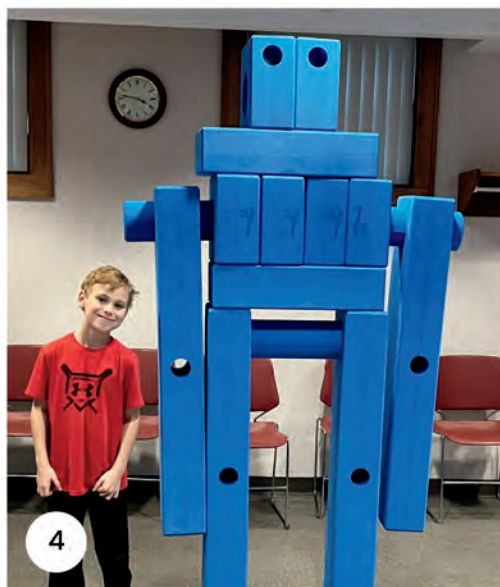
Collections

- Our collections team helped to coordinate our local efforts for an upgrade to the Evergreen Indiana ILS the weekend of January 27 & 28. ILS upgrades are a process that occurs once or twice a year, during which it can be challenging to maintain services. The collections team has continued to refine our use of offline tools to help mitigate these service disruptions and the upgrade process continues to improve and get smoother.
- Elizabeth was also able to identify a cataloging bug surrounding this upgrade, which enabled the Evergreen Indiana team to begin coordinating a response.

Genealogy

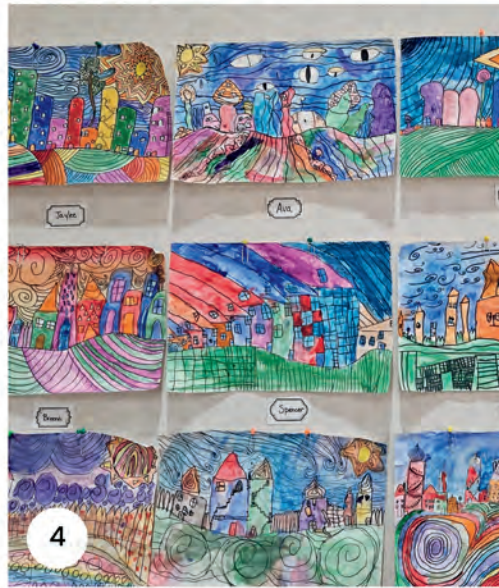
- There was an interesting request for information about Silver Lake, which is across from Valpo's main post office, south of the Vale Park extension. It was previously called "Mud Lake" until 1976, and there was an article that said it was developed by 1930.
- We followed up on a request to find an email address for a former high school acquaintance that was not successful. Staff advised the patron to send a letter to the last known address, and to check Facebook or their high school alumni association.
- The department sent a group of articles to Rocket Fizz about prohibition in Porter County. They are having an event later this year with a prohibition theme. There were pretty surprising ingredients found in the article that included bugs, fuel (wood alcohol), and other plants.
- Progress is being made on the Zabel family project. We also worked on the Wylie and Stefko families.
- Staff located property for a patron who only knew a name and rural route number from the 1950's. The department found newspapers and plat books to be useful in solving this question.

Hebron



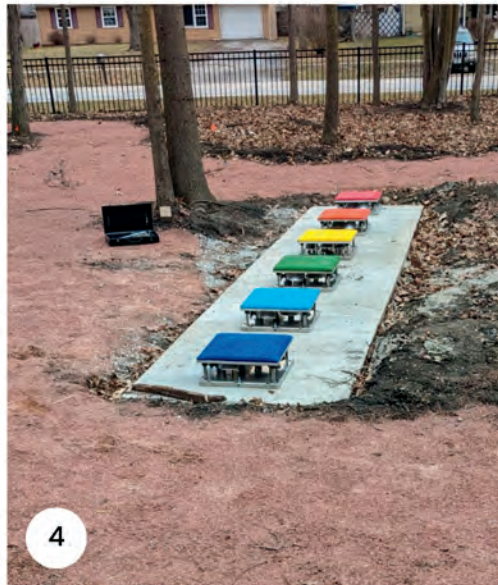
- 1 It was fun for the whole family at the Blue Block Walk-in program.. Even Grandma could join in!
- 2 Hebron's new teen art program was a lot of fun. Teens created some amazing mixed media snowflakes.
- 3 Book babies in Hebron continues to be a popular program. Everyone has a lot of fun learning and playing together.
- 4 The Blue Block Walk-in program was a hit this month. Everyone who came by created something unique
- 5 Our local Daisy Girl Scout Troop came for a special visit and learned about the tracks that different animals make in the snow.

Kouts



- 1 At Lego Club we have several Lego architects work together on their epic creations.
- 2 We had snow much fun at storytime in Kouts. Since it was a very snowy day, everyone got to throw snowballs. Luckily, ours won't melt.
- 3 Bubbles are our favorite! Mother Goose in Kouts is always a lot of fun with stories, silly songs and more!
- 4 The KES Art Department continued their partnership with the library this month to display some amazing art created by the 3rd grade art class.
- 5 At storytime there is always a cool craft to do. For this visit, everyone got to make their own snowperson.

Portage + South Haven



1 40 people of all ages braved the icy, wet weather to attend Portage's first Nail Art Night since July 2023, with Miss Sandra!

2 Kids played Mr. Potato Head at our We Love Chips program in South Haven.

3 Anna Reeder having fun with the kids at Storytime in South Haven.

4 Musical stepping stones were installed in the South Haven Library Garden this month.

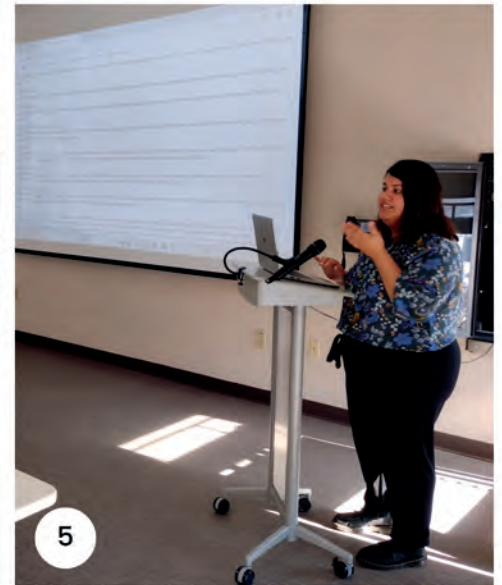
5 Families enjoyed a chip taste test at the We Love Chips program.

Valparaiso



- 1 There was fun had by all at the Bluey Party!
- 2 We're so excited to see the popularity of the Anime Club! Teens really enjoy the activities the screening and activities at each program.
- 3 Teens planted a baby plant and decorated their own pot at this fun program led by Miss Emily!
- 4 Kids crafting their party hats at the Bluey Party!
- 5 Nikki designed activities to welcome in the new year at Anime Club. Teens enjoyed the time to discuss their shared interest, awesome anime!

in Our Community



- 1 Ashley visited OE Respite to promote library resources and continue to grow this great partnership.
- 2 The first Storytime in the Park of 2024 was to fit the theme "Trains". Books! Songs! Letter Recognition! Play! All trains.
- 3 Our First Books Balls Blocks program at the Valpo branch! This new partnership with First Things First and Help Me Grow is off to a great start.
- 4 Our Winter Flurries Reading Program finished up this month. We had great participation and winners enjoyed their awesome prizes!
- 5 Ashley and Sandra spoke with a group of freshmen homeschooled students on how to look up both physical and digital resources.