

Erie County Public Library
Library Advisory Board Meeting
ANNUAL ORGANIZATION MEETING
Wednesday, November 20th
11:30am

Blasco Memorial Library – Community Classroom

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes –October 17, 2019
4. Hearing of Citizens
5. Report of County Council Liaison
6. Friends of the Library Update
7. Review of Financial Report
8. Report of Executive Director
9. Statistical and Other Reports
 - a. Reports from staff members for Vice President & Board
10. Report of District Consultant
11. Report of Committees
 - a. Board Committees
 - b. Staff Presentations
12. Petitions and Communications
13. Board Development and Activities
14. Unfinished Business
 - a. Vote on Revised By-Laws
 - b. Vote officers
15. New Business
 - a. Vote 2020 Meeting Dates & times
 - b. Discuss Board Member Headshot Display
16. Adjournment

3. **Approval of Minutes (separate attachment)**
4. **Hearing of Citizens**
5. **Report of County Council Liaison**
6. **Friends of the Library Update**
7. **Review of Financial Report (separate attachment)**
8. **Report of Executive Director**
9. **Statistical and Other Reports**
 - a. **Review staff reports**

Please review the attached reports provided by our staff to address the questions asked by Vice President at the October 2019 meeting, and plan to discuss at the December meeting:

1. Library Service Points in Erie City Hospitals
2. Veterans History Project
3. Monthly lecture series on social issues pertinent to Erie
4. Services for individuals on the Autism Spectrum
5. On-going online user survey
6. HP and Dell Grant Opportunities
7. Elf on the Shelf activities

1. Library Service Points in Erie City Hospitals—Marcus Yuille

There are boundless possibilities of partnership between Erie County Public Library (ECPL) and hospitals in the Erie City vicinity. ECPL offers a variety of resources. Through the addition of the e-cards, users are given full access to resources without having to physically visit locations. With such access, both patients and visitors can read, listen and watch the materials of their choice. In addition, users are provided an array of research and educational options that are offered on the ECPL website. Our resources would enable patients to remain connected to resources while overcoming physical challenges and provide comfort for families as they provide support. ECPL services and e-resources would be a benefit to Erie City hospitals, patients and their families.

In hopes to gauge the mutual benefit of partnership, I visited UPMC Hamot, St. Vincent's Hospital and Shriners Children's Hospital. At present, none of the three hospitals offer library services to patients, families or staff, beyond doctors and residents. Shockingly, two of these prominent community hospital do not offer any library services; and they do not appear to have any plans alone to develop library services within their hospitals. While UPMC Hamot has a library, its purposes are only for medical research and reference work; and its use is limited to medical professionals. St. Vincent's Hospital recently removed their library for public use. No formal explanation was given and at this time all inquiries are being directed to headquarter offices in Pittsburgh, Pa. Finally, Shriners Children's Hospital, also does not have any library services. Shriner's also at this time does not house any in-patient services; and have limited services even for families in the hospital's waiting room. If they are not current patrons of ECPL, individuals and families who are frequent users of these hospitals have very limited library service access. After having brief conversations with staff members within each hospital, I feel it would be beneficial for ECPL to make a formal presentation to each hospital. As a public library, ECPL has an opportunity to empower individuals; and a presence in Erie City hospitals is another opportunity to enable lifelong learning.

Across the nation, libraries are a trusted resource. A likely unknown fact is that I Pew Research suggests that 38 percent of people use their local libraries to seek health information as opposed to their doctors and hospitals. Public libraries are often people's first point of access into a community; and library programs can be meaningful interactions. In the same capacity, health programming and literacy initiatives in the hospital only benefit users. Several libraries throughout the country have found this type of engagement very useful for patrons and users. ²At the Queens Library in New York City, staff members organized health events partnership with local hospitals. At 53 locations across Queens Library system and at designated

hospitals, programs were offered surrounding prenatal care, cancer and airborne sicknesses. Through this programming the Queens Library successfully built relationships with immigrant populations. The programming created a much needed bridge between migrant individuals, families and healthcare providers.

With ECPL intertwined in the fabric of the Erie City downtown/Bayfront life and the extensions we have throughout the county, there are a wealth of opportunities to be a service point for health education and health literacy programming. Partnership with local hospitals and senior care centers would also provide the library with useful cutting edge information that can be relayed to users and patrons outside of local hospitals. ECPL is a safe place to get information, especially for users that do not have access in other ways. Many people have internet at home or a smart phone in their pocket, but some of the most vulnerable people do not. Library professionals attest that libraries near hospitals are often the first place individuals stop after receiving an overwhelming diagnosis. Senior populations seek help and research at local libraries to navigate and understand their prognosis.

Following a proper introduction to hospital leaders, ECPL could immediately produce ecard resources for local hospitals to advertise for patients and families. The potential growth and future planning for our Bookmobile services could include hospital lobbies as homes for lending libraries. We acknowledge that many avid readers prefer physical materials. This collection could be monitored and updated on a bi-weekly to monthly basis to maintain a consistent and relevant intimate collection. Library services in local hospitals would enhance any length of stay for patients and families. ECPL as a service point in local hospitals is another avenue, where lifelong learning can empowered.

¹ Wahowiak, L. (2018, October 1). Libraries, public health work together on community health: Settings serve as community hubs. Retrieved from <http://thenationshealth.aphapublications.org/content/48/8/1.2>.

² Wahowiak, L. (2018, October 1). Libraries, public health work together on community health: Settings serve as community hubs. Retrieved from <http://thenationshealth.aphapublications.org/content/48/8/1.2>.

2. Veterans History Project—Andrew Miller

The Erie County Public Library currently participates in veterans' initiatives in the following three project areas: collections, veterans-centered programming, and emerging digital collections.

ECPL has many specialized print collections that deal with the American War for Independence, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II. These include pensioner lists, unit/regiment histories, memorial works, cemetery indices, newspaper clipping files, general military histories, military periodicals, and government documents. In 2016, we routed reoccurring grant funds to purchase a subscription to Fold3, a database containing millions of military service records. In addition to its searchable record collection, it also contains interactive remembrances along with editable, individual soldier memorial pages. We have fewer collection sets for Korean, Vietnam, and Iraq/Afghanistan veterans. There is also less material available in print for local police, fire, and EMS groups, although we keep clipping files for both county and city emergency responder agencies. We have collected the WQLN "Our Town" and Erie Times News "Our Fight" recordings. We maintain working relationships with the Erie County Historical Society and the Erie Maritime Museum, both of which have specialized archival collections containing information on Erie County military history. We have done requested outreach at the VA medical hospital around "Genealogy for Veterans." Much of our involvement with veterans' history is at the individual researcher level: for example, in the summer of 2017 we worked with an international researcher to help find the family survivors of an allied bomber crash in Europe.

Programming on Veterans' topics has focused mainly on current issues. A newly hired library assistant initiated a series of sessions called "VETx" which brought community veteran resource speakers to the library in partnership with the Erie County Veteran's Affairs Office in conjunction with the Erie VA Hospital. These programs suffered from very low attendance and spotty participation from partner speakers, and there are no plans to restart the series in 2020. Beginning in January 2020, we are launching a different speaker series entitled "HistERIE" that will cover many different historical topics of regional and national interest; the planned topic for November is a veterans' history speaker. While the 2020 roster of speakers is almost set, future series could intentionally seek Veteran/Fire/Police/EMS speakers, if any are available. Courtney Baran, whose position was made full time this month, also has extensive training in historical display and curation. She has proposed an idea around community-driven historical displays, of which veteran and emergency responder content could be prioritized. It is unlikely that these displays would occur before summer of 2020, as the Minerva display will be up until at least that time.

There are many opportunities to build digital collections surrounding unique veteran record sets. In 2019 we digitized a set of Civil War biographical sketches, which will be available online, free of charge by the end of the year. Staff time will have to be dedicated to transcribing the content to make it keyword searchable, but there is no current estimate as to how long it will take to process the 800 pages of content. That project will act as a good barometer for the amount of content that current ECPL staff has the time to work with. Collection of digital record sets such as journals, audio interviews, or photographs would take a significant amount of staff time for collecting, digitizing, transcribing, and cataloging. A program of any size involving item collection would hinge on the proposed Heritage Room Historian position acting as a project lead.

If we assume current staff capacity, first steps to a digital project might include assembling comprehensive finding aid for veterans' collections in the Heritage room, and producing listings of service personnel from the area. After identifying collection gaps, staff would reach out to area police stations, fire halls, and veterans' organizations. Crowdsourcing is an option to help assemble potential digital collections quickly; volunteers could be utilized for transcription work. Smaller initiatives might center around synergizing displays, collections, programming, and digitization. For example, if Courtney did a community-driven display for local firefighters, accepted short term loaned items from community members and organizations, then secured permission to digitize the items, we could have a display, advertisements for a speaker, and end with a small digital collection executed with the same set of resources, without adding to our physical collection needs.

3. Monthly lecture series on social issues pertinent to Erie—Andrew Miller

Speaker Series in the Hirt Auditorium consisting of topics pertinent to Erie

The Erie County Public Library does not currently host regularly scheduled symposia or speaker series that address current local topics. Many community organizations rent the Hirt Auditorium or Admiral Room for events open to the public. These have included town halls, debates, topic forums, and presentations on current events. Some examples of similar programming that has occurred in the past would be: a seminar on redlining and economic discrimination; a public demonstration of new voting machine options; and a discussion on the aftermath Marjorie-Diehl Armstrong case.

If we wanted to develop our own speaker series, we should be extremely careful in two different areas. First, we must maintain our institutional neutrality; even the choice of topics can be construed as advocating a particular agenda that might be inappropriate for a department of county government. Current examples of topics that are important to the area are the demolition of the McBride Viaduct or the proposal for a community college. It may be (or perceived to be) a conflict of interest for a government agency to directly sponsor speaker sessions, debates, or panels on these topics. Additionally, if a current issue has multiple viewpoints, it would be paramount that all sides receive equal opportunity to participate. Second, the library would have to find a niche that would not to compete with other, similar programs that already exist in the area. The Jefferson Education Society holds regular local issue talks touching on current topics, both their historical context and their current state. Their upcoming month's classes include topics such as discussion on cultural/heritage tourism and its impact on revitalizing the economy; a look at the county's historic action on reducing poverty; and a lecture on how to engage adults in civic education.

Beginning a reoccurring series would most certainly involve a budget for speaker / moderator fees. This would likely have to be via a sponsor or programming money from the Friends. A marketing budget may also be warranted, as topics come and go at irregular times and reoccurring program dates might not be possible. Also, the series would be best suited to quarters or trimesters, as a monthly series would be difficult to fill and promote. Larger JES events that are similar in scope, such as the Metro 100 Conference which dealt with city revitalization topics, required grant funding and dedicated staff to achieve. A small change that might impact this initiative with no additional programming would be to add a section on the Hirt Auditorium or Admiral Room rental agreement that would allow the library to advertise already scheduled programs on its events calendar. We could develop a process to evaluate events and properly list and identify them as community-run programs. This cross-promotion of events would expose library users to community events that they may not otherwise have been aware of, without adding the workload that comes with an in-house speaker series.

4. Services for individuals on the Autism Spectrum—Shane Donaldson

Youth Services response to Library Advisory Board ideas and queries:

Services for individuals on the autism spectrum, including sensory room and/or sensory assistive devices.

Services for autism spectrum patrons and others facing sensory challenges, has been explored in the recent past in Blasco's Youth Services Department. Our initial program idea was holding a two program model. We hosted a Sensory Storytime for families with children on the spectrum, with readings and an environment that would assist with comfort in the Storytime room, and that would deal more with sensory experience to assist with concentration during the program (less storytelling, more craft, and hands on experiences, and a quieter space). The other programs were activities for preschool and toddler aged kids, based around Dav Pilkey's Captain Underpants books and characters. The first event was publicly advertised, while the second was "closed", not advertised but it was announced to our local partner group, Autism Speaks, who communicated to its members

of the program date and time. Unfortunately, we had limited response for both the sensory Storytime and the special Captain Underpants program.

My staff and I often discuss the problems we face programming for a specific stratum of our county population. As with a county of millions of people we are still pulling, on average about 15-20 children for a standard program, registration required or not. And in narrowing our task to a smaller group, it also seems to narrow the response of the public to that event. This is not intended as a critique, but an observation of the scalability of programming in our system. We observe that a large portion of our childrens school age programming is attended by homeschool children whose parents use the library, on many levels, as supplemental, to their children's education and resources. Again, not a critique, but an observation of the populations we serve with Youth Service programming within the ECPL (Erie County Public Library). I also spoke with Julie Boam, Volunteer Coordinator/ Visitor Services at the Children's ExpERIENCE Museum, to get a better sense of the history and experimentation on sensory equipment and spaces that they have dealt with, as we tend to have shared programming ideologies and patron base. Their prior/ current responses have had two focuses; materials and programming.

They attempted some focused programming as well, gathering a sponsor to pay for it, so that these families did not have to front costs, as is normal for the museums model. They partnered with local groups, the Barber National Institute, Autism Society NWPA, and the Achievement Center, Inc. Their outcomes were similar to our own, as very few families attended the closed museum programming for this specific group.

The museum went into a passive, but more proactive route, the implementation and development of sensory kits. Materials for sensory challenges consisting of kits, developed out of grant funding through UPMC. The transparent sensory back packs consist of varied inventory: weighted blankets, noise canceling headphones, fidget devices, as well as material to acclimate persons who might need prior awareness of when they are entering a noisy, busy or closed environment. This kit can be used in-house.

The Carnegie Library System of Pittsburgh has kits available for patrons at all locations, in-house, as well:

All 19 Carnegie Library locations own Sensory Discovery Programming kits. These kits include many supports for sensory needs, including noise canceling headphones, weighted lap pads and fidgets. All of our locations also own Sensory Discoveries Alt kits which include items which can help adapt programming for children and adults of all abilities, such as adaptive scissors, Dot Art Painters, scented markers and triangular crayons. These items are available for use within the Library, just ask a staff member. ¹

They also strongly reinforce their commitment to having an exploratory environment in their library branches.

All of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Children's spaces include sensory friendly toys and furniture. Inclusive toys and furniture appeal to children of all abilities, but for children with autism they can provide essential sensory support. Many people with autism find the most benefit from items which engage two or more senses, such as Wiggle seats which are brightly colored, textured and engage a child's sense of balance. Other items limit the amount of sensory input a child receives, such as the Cozy Cube reading nook which provides a secure and calming environment. The Cocoon Chairs found in many of our

Children's spaces not only invite you snuggle up and enjoy a book, but were designed to limit visual input for children with sensory needs. There are Liquid floor tiles that transform a normal floor into an interactive exploration. Textured Water Lily Pads and colorful Riverstones can be found in many neighborhood locations to develop a child's sense of balance. Many locations also have Light walls which are a sensory favorite, as they provide a visual and touch sensation. ²

It is this kit and environmental approach that might afford us more positive attention and act as a solution to bringing these families into library locations in the ECPL system. Not just these specific kits, but cultivating more space in the Childrens Department to foster a playful sensory environment.

Cost of a kit can range from \$100-\$200, considering each backpack could be equipped with a weighted blanket, noise canceling headphones, fidget devices, etc. Earlier in the year, we had considered applying for a grant, Autism Welcome Here³. We benched the process this year for time considerations, but perhaps this is the route to go in 2020, considering a system wide program of this nature for ECPL.

This past year we have been slowly, altering our back window spaces to include open block play and toddler play spaces that primarily deal with block toys, puzzles, and the like. We plan to promote and enhance this space, and perhaps this can work, in tandem with a sensory kit program. As well as developing a means of purchase for these materials, and adding them to our collections, we can also foster the relationships that the Childrens ExpERIEnce Museum does. Then market this idea directly with these organizations, so that they can suggest these option to families who might not regularly attend library programming. Parents may not be sure of their child's responses in a complicated environment such as the library, but they might be more confident, knowing that there are means to minimize negative aspects to the experience. Welcoming them into our programs and the whole library environment as inclusive parts of our patron family.

5. On-going online user survey—Sheryl Thomas

Board Inquiry Response:

On-Going Online User Survey

The Library has created annual surveys and solicited community input into library programs and services since at least 2015. SurveyMonkey and a search of the Shared Server show records of community surveys being sent out in 2015, 2016, and 2017. Additionally, there is an annual Summer Library Challenge or Summer Reading Program that summer program participants are asked to complete on an annual basis. This second survey consists of questions provided by the State Library and are not modified by library staff. Any annual library-wide surveys launched prior to 2015 are not available on SurveyMonkey and were not found on the Shared Server so, if they existed, I have been unable to find information on them.

2015 Survey

The 2015 library survey was launched with the intent to gain information on "ideas for the Blasco Idea Lab" and to "help shape the future of the Blasco Library". The survey garnered 280 responses submitted between June 7th and July 5th. The twenty questions presented included 'do you have a library card?', 'how often do you visit the library?' 'what do you value most about the library?', and 'how does the library benefit you or the community?'. Additionally, the survey gathered general demographic data, such as age range, employment status, and education level. Other questions asked about how individuals received information about library programs or events, and what they would like to see at the library in future. The 2015 survey was launched shortly after the rebranding of the library's logo and tagline, and provided the first survey mention of the future Idea Lab. It was provided to patrons solely as a web link via SurveyMonkey. This survey would most likely have been created by either IT Manager Becca Long or then-Blasco Coordinator Erin Wincek.

2016 Survey

The 2016 survey was much more successful than its predecessor and gathered 977 total responses from July 24th through August 28th. The press release for this survey stated that it was created as an initiative of the library's new five-year strategic plan. This time collectors were set up not only through the SurveyMonkey web link but also as popup invitations on library public PCs. More than two-thirds of the responses were garnered through the popup invites. While asking similar demographic and basic usage questions as the 2015 survey, the 2016 survey drilled into hopes for the coming Idea Lab, satisfaction with customer service, database usage and awareness, borrowing format preferences, and communication preferences. This survey included twenty-nine questions but still had a significant response rate. The responses from this survey heavily influenced equipment purchases for the Idea Lab in 2017. Responses also helped to inform collection spending patterns and provided insight into the best methods for contacting our users. As in 2015, this survey would most likely have been created by either IT Manager Becca Long or then-Blasco Coordinator Erin Wincek.

2017 Survey

The last year a community survey was completed was 2017. This survey consisted of twenty-two questions and received 852 responses, about 13% less than the response rate for the previous year. Responses were collected again through both the web link and popup invite, with nearly three times the number of patrons responding via popup invite (on our catalog computers) than via the web link. The survey was open from August 27th through September 24th. This survey did not ask about demographics but rather focused questions on learning styles, item requests and the delivery system's efficiency, nontraditional item lending (fishing poles, hotspots, etc.), perception of building safety, and awareness of the Foundation and Friends of the Library. The survey was created by a committee of staff from all levels and both Blasco and the branches, led by then-director Erin Wincek and myself. In addition to popups and a website banner advertising the survey, links were also shared on social media and individuals were invited to complete the survey via flyers at each service desk.

Future Surveys

While the library has not created and sent out an annual survey in 2018 and 2019, the process for doing so is fairly straightforward and can be done in future. A review of questions from previous years is possible as 2015-2017 are still available for perusal on SurveyMonkey. New or reused questions would need to be decided upon either by a committee or the director/assigned lead. The IT Department would assist in adding popups to the website and a banner could be created for the website as well. Social media posts would be scheduled to advertise the endeavor. Additionally, paper copies could be distributed to areas without access to the internet, such as Bookmobile stops or other outlying communities. This may have been done in previous years but I can find no definitive answer. My recommendation would be for a month-long survey to capitalize on a sustained publicity and awareness campaign, ideally falling in August and September to catch summer visitors as well as our returning regulars. This would also allow a thoughtful and focused review of response data at the end of the survey period. While the library could certainly create and launch an on-going survey, determinations on when to review data, goals for an on-going survey versus a point-in-time questionnaire, and when or how to update questions as needed would need to be made. Focusing efforts on a month-long survey would allow the library' to spotlight the campaign at a single time, whereas an on-going survey would require publicity efforts to run concurrently with other library program or system efforts. Additionally, while offered with a different focus, patrons do have the opportunity to complete comment cards either via the website or in person at each location at any point in the year to express opinions.

Submitted by Sheryl Thomas
15 November 2019



Hewlett Packard Enterprise Foundation Grant Opportunities for the Erie County Public Library

Objective: To research grant opportunities through the Hewlett Packard Foundation that could be implemented within the Erie County Public Library such as computer and technology replacement grants and potential technology education for the underserved communities.

HP Technology for Community Grant Initiatives:

Overview:

Please see the attached official grant information from Hewlett Packard.

Program is limited geographically.

HP requests that you identify the zip codes in which your organization operates in order to determine your organization’s degree of preference. **The locations were selected based upon identification of HP sites with the largest numbers of HP employees because one of our key objectives for the program is to support communities where HP employees work and live.**

The Hewlett Foundation can be accessed through the Foundation Center database. Using this tool, you can see the recent statistics of where the grants have been geographically focused in addition to the types of organizations given funding and their support strategies. Below is a table showing their funding interests along with some basic metrics over the last 5 years.

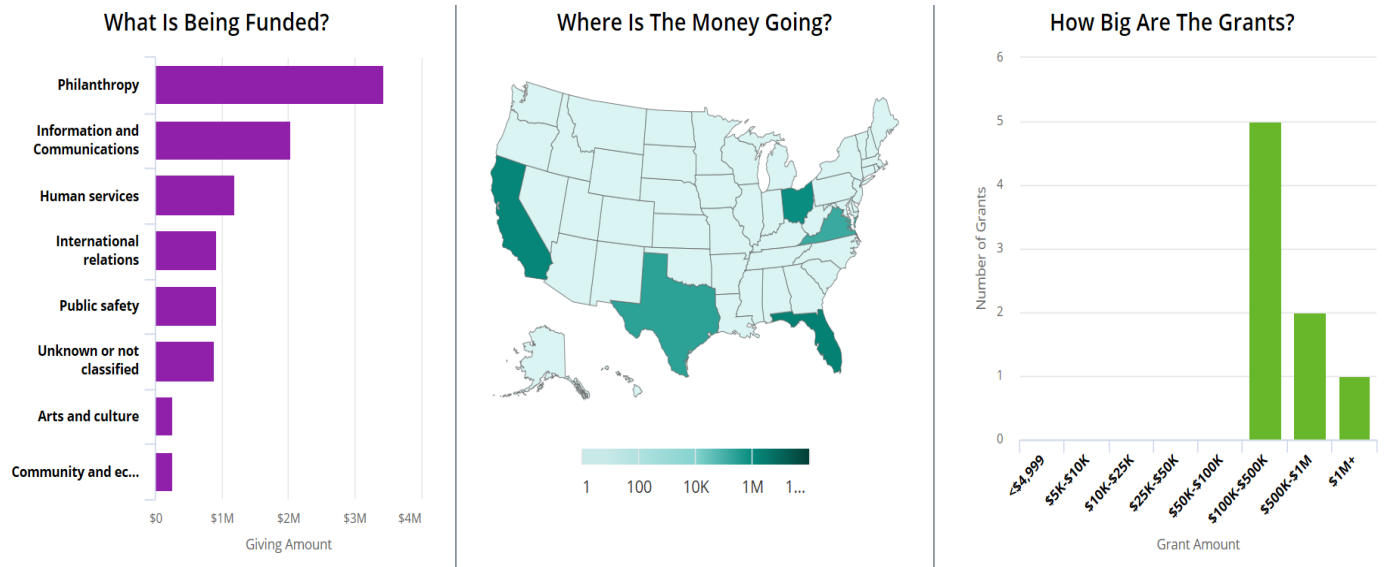
Funding Interests

SUBJECTS Disaster preparedness Disaster relief Disasters and emergency management Food aid Foundations + View all	GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS Georgia (U.S. state) Texas California North Carolina Bulgaria + View all	POPULATION GROUPS Economically disadvantaged people Low-income people Victims and oppressed people Victims of disaster
SUPPORT STRATEGIES Data and measurement systems Financial sustainability General support Online media	TRANSACTION TYPES Cash grants Employee matching gifts Employee volunteer services	ORGANIZATION TYPES Community foundations Donor-advised funds

Hewlett Packard Enterprise Foundation Most Recent 5 Years At A Glance



They've funded 8 grants to 8 organizations totaling \$4,535,167



The average grant funded is \$250K. At this time, a recent awarded grant could not be found comparable to apply to ECPL initiatives.

Dell Grant Opportunities

Objective: To research grant opportunities through the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation along with The Dell Foundation that could be implemented within the Erie County Public Library for educating the underserved in our community.

Overview:

Michael and Susan Dell Foundation

The Michael and Susan Dell Foundation focus on the acceleration of opportunities for children growing up in urban poverty. The foundation's mission is to fund initiatives that seek to foster active minds, healthy bodies and a safe environment where children can thrive. It proactively seeks out opportunities to support or develop programs that address five essential focus areas: children's health, education, safety, youth development and early childhood care

Below are a couple examples of grants given toward community and economic development along with the education of the lower income underserved population.

<p>RECIPIENT</p> <p>Bottom Line </p> <p>Boston, MA, United States</p>	<p>\$220,000</p> <p>GRANT AMOUNT</p> <p>2017</p> <p>YEAR</p>	<p>GRANTMAKER</p> <p>Michael & Susan Dell Foundation</p> <p>Austin, TX, United States</p>
<p>Description</p> <p>National Office Infrastructure Enhancement</p>	<p>Subjects</p> <p>Community and economic development; Higher education; Out-of-school learning</p> <p>Population Groups</p> <p>Academics; Adolescents; Low-income people; Economically disadvantaged people; Ethnic and racial groups; Students</p> <p>Transaction Types</p> <p>Cash grants</p>	<p>Geographic Areas Served</p> <p>California, India, New York, South Africa, Texas</p> <p>Support Strategies</p> <p>Capacity-building and technical assistance</p>
<p>RECIPIENT</p> <p>Community Partners </p> <p>Los Angeles, CA, United States</p>	<p>\$10,000</p> <p>GRANT AMOUNT</p> <p>2013</p> <p>YEAR</p>	<p>GRANTMAKER</p> <p>Michael & Susan Dell Foundation</p> <p>Austin, TX, United States</p>
<p>Description</p> <p>For General Support</p>	<p>Subjects</p> <p>Community and economic development; Nonprofits</p> <p>Population Groups</p> <p>Economically disadvantaged people</p> <p>Transaction Types</p> <p>Cash grants</p>	<p>Geographic Areas Served</p> <p>California, India, New York, South Africa, Texas</p> <p>Support Strategies</p> <p>General support</p>

With youth development and education being a primary focus, the Erie County Public Library could potentially utilize this grant opportunity. Before the application process begins, a committee would need to devise a well thought out program that the youth in the community could access and utilize. **Eligibility would need accessed prior to the application to see if the library being a government entity would qualify.**

**** I would recommend having the Erie Regional Library Foundation apply for the grant since Non-Profit status is a credential. ****

The Dell Foundation- Open Grants (Empowering Youth Grant Program)

The Dell Foundation provides limited open grants year-round to programs and services that fall outside the timeline and scope of the Empowering Youth grant program. Open grants are financial, volunteer or in-kind support, limited to \$5,000 or less and serve populations in Dell's principal US locations.

Timing: Open grant applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis:

Applications submitted:	Notification by:
February through April	June 15
May through July	September 15
August through October	December 15
November through January	March 15

Open Grant proposals are limited to one submission per calendar year.

Criteria:

- Organization must be in one of the following counties to qualify for an Open Grant: **ECPL does not qualify geographically**
 - In Idaho: Twin Falls County
 - In Illinois: Lake County and Cook County
 - In New Hampshire: Hillsborough County
 - In North Carolina: Forsyth County and Guilford County
 - In Oklahoma: Oklahoma County
 - In Tennessee: Wilson County and Davidson County
 - In Texas: Travis County and Williamson County
- Must be registered nonprofit organizations. Priority given to agencies that are registered 501(c)(3) by the Internal Revenue Service.
- Must be for direct programs and services to youth ages newborn to high school seniors



Individuals and nonprofit organizations around the world are doing great work on important social issues, and many contact us for support. However, HP does not respond to requests for grants or other support.

We work with experts across borders, industries, and institutions to help address global issues, including those related to education and entrepreneurship.

Can HP provide technology for a local nonprofit or school in need?

Due to the hundreds of requests we receive each year it is impossible to fulfill every inquiry. That is why our grants are strategically chosen to align with annually developed Sustainability initiatives. We do not accept unsolicited requests from educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations or individuals.

Can I get an HP equipment donation (laptop, printer, etc.)?

HP assists hundreds of organizations annually with contributions of equipment, cash and volunteers. However, because our support is limited to grants that align with annually developed Sustainability initiatives, we do not take unsolicited requests from educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations or individuals.

You may want to seek support through a charitable, not-for-profit organization in your community. For a listing of these organizations operating in your region, we suggest you contact the local United Way or a local community charitable foundation office.

Does HP provide laptops for college?

HP assists hundreds of organizations annually with contributions of equipment, cash and volunteers. Because our support is limited to grants that align with annually developed initiatives, we are unable to assist individuals through financial contributions, scholarships, computer donations, discounts or loans.

You may want to seek support through a charitable, not-for-profit organization in your community. For a listing of these organizations operating in your region, we suggest you contact the local United Way or a local community charitable foundation office.



Grant information

Can HP sponsor my conference/fundraiser/sports event?

Due to the hundreds of requests we receive every year it is impossible to fulfill every inquiry. That is why our sponsorships are strategically chosen to align with annually developed Sustainability initiatives. We do not accept unsolicited requests from educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations or individuals.

Can HP provide funding for a local nonprofit or school in need?

Due to the hundreds of requests we receive every year it is impossible to fulfill every inquiry. That is why our grants are strategically chosen to align with annually developed Sustainability initiatives. We do not accept unsolicited requests from educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations or individuals.

Can I get a personal grant from HP to start my business/fund my technology idea?

While we applaud the innovation of entrepreneurs around the world, HP does not provide funding of this nature. As many countries provide funding support for entrepreneurs, you may want to visit your regional and federal government websites to find out about the resources that are available in your area.

Does HP have a scholarship program?

Currently we do not offer scholarship programs of any sort.

7. Elf on the Shelf activities—Shane Donaldson

Elf on the Shelf activity around the holidays —

Are we relating an elf on the shelf program to a passive programming event or a more active program? We do have a legion of passive scavenger hunt programming events in our library branches. The themes have varied, including, Birds, Presidents, Dinosaurs, and Pokémon. We have not only used these hunts as an active means of exploring the library, but have placed these items to find in specific points of the collection, giving hints to the kids about where these collections are, but what these collections are, in order to help build knowledge on the intricacy of our spaces, and the depth of our material resources.

My staff and I have shared concern over having a holiday themed passive program that could be misconstrued as biased toward a certain portion of our population.

However, if you are looking at more traditional programming, we did have a Santa visit last year. And are attempting to hold one this year, as well (Our Santa is still negotiating times). There will also be a Christmas/Yule traditions program that discusses different winter cultural icons and rituals from around the globe. Before you wonder why I am seeming biased over Santa vs Elf on a shelf, it comes down to the presence of the elf in the library throughout the Christmas season vs having a Santa visit or program that occurs on one Saturday in December. Santa is also a long standing cultural phenomenon, that though religious in origin, has a presence across religious boundaries. Elf on the Shelf, comes off as a bit more commercial and recent, though I do know of many libraries who have successfully held Elf on a Shelf contests in their libraries, which often relate to a holiday raffle for a grand prize. We do offer a prize incentive for our scavenger hunts, but it is available to all who complete the "hunt."

It is not in anyone's mindset to create programming bias, but I merely want to be cognizant of the appearance of bias, even when none is occurring.

Suggested links for referenced ideas:

1. https://www.morningjournal.com/news/lorain-county/popular-elf-on-the-shelf-contestunderway-at-amherst-public/article_86c90ce6-ffbe-11e8-bfe7-83cb85657d2c.html
2. <https://www.connectradio.fm/2018/12/07/elf-on-the-shelf-scavenger-hunt-thissaturday-in-dubois/>
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/elf-on-the-shelf-what-is-itchristmas-tradition-could-be-harming-children-explained-a7485201.html>

Sources:

1. & 2. Laura, "Story Pockets: Sensory Support at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh," Carnegielibrary.com, April 22, 2019, accessed November 14, 2019, <https://www.carnegielibrary.org/sensory-support-atcarnegie-library-of-pittsburgh/>, section 2 & 3.
3. "The Autism Welcome Here: Library Programs, Services and More grant," <http://librariesandautism.org>, accessed November 15, 2019, librariesandautism.org/grant/
4. Julie Boam
Visitor Services & Volunteer Coordinator julie@eriechildrensmuseum.org

10. Report of District Consultant

11. Report of Committees

12. Petitions and Communications

13. Board Development and Activities

14. Unfinished Business

- a. Vote on Revised By-Laws

ARTICLE I AUTHORITY

The bylaws of the Erie County Public Library Advisory Board shall be in compliance with and shall meet all requirements as set forth in the Pennsylvania Library Code, The Home Rule Charter of Erie County, and the Erie County Administrative Code.

ARTICLE II STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this Advisory Board shall be to participate in, evaluate, and give support to the provision, development, and promotion of adequate library programs within the Erie County Public Library in accordance with the regulations and guidelines established by the Administrative Code and the Pennsylvania Library Code.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

The members of the Erie County Public Library Advisory Board shall be appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by County Council in accordance with Article II, Section 5 (A)1k of the Erie Administrative Code.

The board shall consist of nine members. In accordance with Article II, Section 5 (A)1.g of the Erie Administrative Code, Each County Council member will appoint one resident from their Council district to reflect countywide representation. Two members-at-large to be appointed by the County Executive to reflect additional qualifications beneficial to the board (Home Rule Charter, Article III Section 5 (K)); their term shall be for three years.

Board members shall attend a minimum of 9 meetings per year. All members shall serve at the end of their term until their successors have been appointed. If a vacancy occurs on the Board due to a resignation, death, relocation to a different council district or failure to attend three consecutive board meetings (without prior notification via phone or electronic communication to Board President, Executive Director, and recording secretary) the President shall notify the County Executive's office, so that a replacement may be appointed to the Board. Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the vacated term(s). The remaining board members

may recommend nominees for consideration. The new appointee must be a resident of the same council district which was vacated.

No member shall serve more than two consecutive complete terms; at least 1 term shall separate service on the board. No member shall receive compensation for his or her service.

ARTICLE IV RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD

The Erie County Public Library Board shall be responsible for;

1. Advising on library policies as proposed by the Executive Director and Library Managers.
2. Collaborating with Library Administrators to develop and establish goals for each submission of the Erie County 3-Year Plan, and Library Strategic Plans.
3. Appraising continuously the adequacy and quality of library services and facilities to the community, within the constraints of the library budget as established by County government, and reporting any deficiencies to the Executive Director.
4. Upon the vacancy of the position of Executive Director of the Erie County Public Library, the Board shall assist the County Executive in identifying the most qualified applicants(s) from whom the County Executive shall select one to fill the position.
5. Reviewing budgetary and other library activity oversight reports of the Executive Director and library personnel.
6. Advising each year, in August, a program developed by the Executive Director for the coming year, delineating the proposed financial expenditures and revenues and describing any new plans for major acquisitions or expansions. This will enable it to be submitted to the County Executive and County Council by the budget deadline.
7. The Board also reviews any other budgetary programs recommended by the executive director, as may be required by the Erie County Charter or by County Ordinance. In addition, the board is to be aware of the need for soliciting additional funds for the library and will support the Friends of the Library and the Erie Regional Library Foundation in their fundraising efforts.

8. Reports upon request to the County Executive and County Council on matters relating to the library operations, budget services and other pertinent matters.
9. Establishes its own rules for the conduct of its meetings, except that procedure shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.
10. At each meeting, a member of the Board shall report on activities from their district which inform library operations and/or report on a meeting with their appointing council member. Reports from the county council liaison may also be read.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

SECTION A TIME AND LOCATION

Meetings of the Board shall be held monthly, the time and place to be determined by a majority of the board, and shall comply with the provisions of the Pennsylvania "Sunshine Law."

For purposes of special need, the Board may meet at other times at the discretion of the President or upon the written request of 3 members.

The calendar for the Board meetings will be approved by the Board annually at the September meeting. Any change in the date, time, or location of a scheduled meeting shall be given to all members at least 7 days in advance of the meeting. If the notification is not made at a prior Board meeting, the notification can be made by telephone or electronic communications.

A majority of the members in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and acts of the quorum shall be actions of the board. When appropriate and necessary, an electronic or telephone vote may be taken. A quorum is needed to adopt any measure and such measures will be considered as actions of the board.

SECTION B AGENDA & MINUTES

Meeting minutes shall be recorded and posted for public inspection following board approval. To remain transparent, budget reports shall also be released as an agenda exhibit. The Board shall develop its own agenda, to include at minimum:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- Library Reports
- Board and Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

SECTION A Term of Office

Officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. A recording secretary shall be appointed and need not be a board member. The treasurer shall be the Erie County Director of Finance, the title being a permanent ex-officio member of the board. The Executive Director shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the board. The President, Vice President, and Secretary shall be elected at the annual organizational meeting held in November.

SECTION B Nominating Committee

The President shall appoint a nominating committee of two members at the September meeting to prepare a slate of officers. This slate will be given to the board at the October Board Meeting, and will be voted upon at the annual meeting in November. If a vacancy occurs in the Office of President, the Vice President shall assume that office. A vacancy in the Office of Vice President shall be filled by board election at the next meeting after the vacancy occurs.

SECTION C Duties of the Officers

The President shall preside at all meetings of the board and represent the board at meetings of County officials. The President shall appoint members to committees with board concurrence and may serve as ex-

officio of all committees. The President shall have the management responsibilities usually vested in that office.

The Vice President shall act in all cases for and as the President in the latter's absence or incapacity. The Secretary shall collect and present all reports from liaisons and members in their absence.

The recording secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of all board meetings. These minutes will be kept in a permanent book in the office of the Executive Director of the Library.

The President will appoint committees as necessary. The President shall name the chair for each committee. Each committee shall provide a brief written record of each meeting to the Board. Any committee recommendations shall be considered a motion at the next Board Meeting and not require a second.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

The Board may amend these bylaws by a majority vote of all the members then in office at any regular meeting of the Board of Directors, provided that notice of any such proposed amendments shall have been given five days in advance of the meeting. In addition, The President and Vice President shall review the bylaws annually with the Executive Director and make any recommendations in writing at the October Board Meeting. Recommendations will be voted on at the annual organization meeting in November.

###

Revised November 16, 2017

Revised November 20, 2019

b. [Vote officers](#)

The appointed Nominating Committee presents the following slate of officers for approval:

Trevor Pearson, President
Heather Canfield, Vice-President
Bill Conway, Secretary

15. New Business

a. Vote 2020 Meeting Dates & times

Tentative Dates for Library Advisory Board Meeting 2020

Third Thursday of Each Month
12pm to 1:30pm
Admiral Room (Blasco Library)

January 16, 2020
February 20, 2020
March 19, 2020
April 16, 2020
May 21, 2020
June 18, 2020
July 16, 2020
August 20, 2020
September 17, 2020
October 15, 2020
November 19, 2020
December 17, 2020

b. Discuss Board Member Headshot Display

Suggestion by Trevor Pearson to display photo of board members for public inspection

16. Adjournment

Election will reshape County Council - By Matthew - Erie Times-News

(PA) - October 20, 2019 - page 1

October 20, 2019 | Erie Times-News (PA) | matthew.rink@timesnews.com | Page 1

Four of Erie County Council's seven seats are up for election this year, but one issue voters won't have much say over on Nov. 5 is how much experience council will have come 2020.

When Councilmembers Fiore Leone, Carol Loll and Kathy Fatica leave office at the end of the year, they'll take a combined 70 years experience with them. Councilman Kyle Foust, who is seeking reelection

to his 5th District seat, could leave with another 16 years experience if he either loses or resigns the seat to serve as Erie County controller, which he is also running for this election cycle. If all four veteran council members leave, the makeup of the panel would include four political newcomers, two members in Carl Anderson and Scott Rastetter who are in the middle of their first terms, and Andre Horton, who is in the middle of his second four-year term.

Erie County Clerk Doug Smith said a change of such magnitude will be almost unprecedented, with the exception of when the first County Council was seated in 1978 after the county adopted its home-rule charter. Leone was among those first members.

Smith said his office and other county offices will work as closely as possible to educate new members about process and policy and to connect new members with other department heads and employees. Those face-to-face meetings have been valuable in the past, he said.

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania also offers training for new county commissioners/council members that Smith recommends.

"There's always a learning curve for new members of council," he said. "What I'm anticipating is that myself and certainly other members of council will be doing a lot of teaching."

But meetings, paperwork and training are no substitute for experience, he added.

"Generally speaking, people that run for public offices like this, they probably have some sort of an issue that interests them, that they're attached to, something they want to see changed or improved or whatever it might be," Smith said. "But certainly when they get in here and they see how the machinery works (they learn) that an awful lot of it really just involves getting in there and experiencing the pitfalls of having to get something through a group of people — and not only a group of people, but multiple branches."

Some of the candidates running for County Council spoke recently about the steps they've taken to prepare for both the campaign and, if successful, the office. For example, in the 1st District race, Democrat Kimberly Thayer Clear, an English teacher at McDowell Senior High School, interviewed 50 people this summer about the job, including current and former officeholders and employees.

Her opponent, Republican Robert Yates, said he's studied County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper's 2020 budget proposal, met with Perry Wood, the executive director of the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority, and had conversations with officials from the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College, which until late August was discussing a possible partnership with the county.

Yates said he's put a lot of "time, research and effort" into the issues facing the county. Clear said the people she spoke with gave her tips on how to connect with constituents, among other things. Clear and Yates, who have also attended several council meetings this year, are running for the seat currently held by Fatica. Fatica is the least senior of the members leaving council with only four years. However, her appointment to the office came after the passing of her husband, Phil Fatica, in 2015. Kathy Fatica has served what would have been her late husband's third term. Fatica, a Democrat, and Loll, a Republican, announced earlier this year they would not seek re-election. Leone, with 42 years of experience, is the longest-serving elected county official in the state. He will cede his 3rd District seat to fellow Democrat Mary Rennie. Rennie, a former director of the Erie County Public Library, defeated Leone in a three-way primary in May. Rennie does not face Republican opposition on Nov. 5.

The other seat belongs to Loll, who took office in 1997 as an appointee to the 7th District. Running for her seat are Democrat Rita Bishop and Republican Ellen Schauerman.

Then there's Foust — the wildcard. Foust, a Democrat, is running for two county positions, reelection to a fifth term serving the 5th District and for county controller.

In the latter, Foust is attempting to unseat two-term Republican incumbent Mary Schaaf. Foust knows he has support in the district that's elected him four times before, but that he's also untested in a countywide election. Foust could lose to both Schaaf and council candidate Brian Shank, his GOP opposition; win one seat, but not the other; or win both. In that case, Foust has said he would resign his council seat to serve as the controller.

But part of his pitch for re-election to his council seat is his veteran status.

"My 16 years of experience going forward will be very helpful, especially with a lot of new members on council," Foust said recently.

In the scenario in which Foust doesn't return, 86 years of County Council experience would be gone, leaving only 10 years in its place when the new term starts next year.

"It's a little frightening, honestly," said Smith, who became county clerk in February 2003. "I rely on Fiore all the time and Carol just the same. And Kathy, too, even though she has less time than the others. They're an invaluable part of council's ability to do its business. That's going to be a big change for council as a whole and a big change for the staff.

"But having that different sort of makeup that'll make for a very interesting group of legislators," he added. "It's exciting in a way to have all of these new faces and new ideas and perhaps new approaches."

Matthew Rink can be reached at 870-1884 or by email. Follow him on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ETNrink.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

matthew.rink@timesnews.com. "Election will reshape County Council By Matthew Rink." Erie Times-News (PA), ET D ed., sec. PA News, 20 Oct. 2019, p. 1. NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and Current, infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/176B034B55156E30. Accessed 22 Oct. 2019.

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Library professionals gather in Erie - Erie Times-News (PA) - October 20, 2019 - page 6

October 20, 2019 | Erie Times-News (PA) | Page 6

The Pennsylvania Library Association's 2019 conference was recently held in Erie, the first time the annual gathering has been in the city in more than 30 years. The conference at the Bayfront Convention Center was expected to draw about 400 attendees — mostly school, academic or special library professionals and vendors from across the state — for four days of events, sessions and keynote speakers that ended Wednesday.

The committee worked hard to highlight Erie-area attractions by offering several excursions for attendees, including a breakfast tour of Presque Isle Bay on the Victorian Princess, a trip to the Erie Art Museum and a wine trail visit to Burch Farms Country Market and Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co. in North East, among others.

Various offerings provided an opportunity for the Friends of the Erie County Public Library to become engaged in making this a memorable experience for everyone visiting Erie.

The Erie County Public Library is a leader in many ways with Blasco on the bayfront as the main library plus four branches and a Bookmobile.

"We were happy to share that with conference attendees," said Blane Dessy, executive director of the Erie County Public Library.

"The library staff members were very excited to participate in this conference and to act as hosts,"

said Dessy, who retired from the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., about a year ago, moved to Erie, and took over as executive director in May.

Library Assistant Director Sheryl Thomas called it “an excellent opportunity to showcase our county library to librarians and other individuals from throughout the commonwealth. We were very excited to have the conference in Erie, particularly since autumn allows us to show off so much natural beauty.” Thomas, originally from southern California, is enjoying her third year in Erie. Eight local staff members took part as presenters during the conference: Rachel Stevenson, Maggie Ignasiak, Tammy Blount, Abby Zielinski, Amberlee McGaughey, Abby Textor, Marcia Wilking and Marcy Hall. Also from Erie and presenting, though not employees of the Erie County Public Library, were Jonathan D’Silva, an attorney at MMI Intellectual Property, and Jay Breneman, director of community and government services at Strategy Solutions, Inc.

The association’s executive director is Christi Baker of Mechanicsburg. The organization is headquartered near Harrisburg. Learn more about it at www.palibraries.org. Kudos to the Erie conference committee chairwoman, Paula Collins of Lancaster County.

Of special note, three Erie County Public Library children’s librarians — Ignasiak, McGaughey and Elizabeth Martin — were presented with the Carolyne L. Smith Best Practices Award in the category of Design & Display. The winning display encouraged civic engagement and voting and was at Blasco Library in November.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

"Library professionals gather in Erie." Erie Times-News (PA), ET D ed., sec. PA Features, 20 Oct. 2019, p. 6. NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and Current, infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/176B034B722D8520. Accessed 22 Oct. 2019.

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PA News - Erie Times-News (PA) - October 24, 2019 - page 10

Thanks to all who support our Erie County Library

The Friends of the Erie County Public Library are celebrating National Friends of the Library Week from Oct. 20-26. We feel that the best way to celebrate this week is to thank not only our members and many volunteers, but all of you who have generously donated your gently used adult books, large print books, children’s books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks and puzzles to us.

We could not accomplish our mission of raising additional funds for special programming for the Erie County Public Library system without all of you. So if it was one book that you donated by taking it to your closest library branch, or dropping off a small bag of items at the Bayfront Bookshelf at Blasco Library, or a trunkful that you gave to us at our Drive Thru Book Drives on April 15 and Sept. 14, we want you to know that you are making a positive difference in our community. Thank you!

– Peg Shenefelt, president, Friends of the Erie County Public Library

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

"PA News." Erie Times-News (PA), ET D ed., sec. PA News, 24 Oct. 2019, p. 10. NewsBank: Access

World News – Historical and Current, infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/176C547FB5072260. Accessed 24 Oct. 2019.

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It's time to open the books for Friends of Libraries week!

Dozens of people joining together at the Erie County Library to celebrate the work that Friends of Libraries do. In Erie County, the organization works to help provide funding for various programs along with concerts. The group is filled with members who are looking to give back in an area that helped with them with their career.

“We’re a lot of ex-teachers, ex-librarians, ex-social workers and other people who just have always been involved with libraries and with reading,” said Peg Shenefelt, President of the Friends of the Erie County Public Library. “It’s our way of kind of paying back to the community.”

To honor this, County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper declared this week as Friends of Libraries Week in Erie County.

Video at link:

<https://www.yourerie.com/news/local-news/dozens-coming-together-for-friends-of-libraries-week-celebration/>

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SNOE: Public Libraries in Northwest Pennsylvania Strengthen Collaboration Efforts.

October 31, 2019 Compendium News Staff In Library News, Professional Development, Resources of Interest, Rural and Small Libraries
October, 2019, Erie, Pennsylvania, USA – **Public libraries in Northwest Pennsylvania strengthen collaboration efforts.**

A new regional collaboration: **SNOE Library District**, the first of its kind in Pennsylvania, will move our public libraries forward into the future. The partnership will provide access to more expansive training opportunities and expertise in order to equip librarians and library staff to meet the needs of modern libraries and their communities.

The collaboration efforts will encourage innovative ideas to be shared between communities and library staff to meet the ever-evolving needs of their patrons. Support will expand in areas such as emerging technologies, robust customer service, changing job skills, and creating inviting community spaces and interesting activities. It will also enhance services to our diverse and underserved areas and populations. This partnership encompasses the Northwest region of Pennsylvania, benefiting the over one million residents in the fourteen counties of Erie, Warren, McKean, Crawford, Venango, Forest, Elk, Cameron, Mercer, Clarion, Jefferson, Lawrence, Butler, and Armstrong.

“I am very excited to make this partnership official. The informal collaboration between the four districts has existed for years and now we’ve ensured that this type of collaboration will continue and expand into the future. It’s entirely a win-win situation” said **Blane Dessy**, Library Director at Erie County Public Library.

This partnership establishes a framework for future initiatives which will continue to strengthen our libraries, resulting in improved library services for Pennsylvanians.

— submitted by:

Marcia Wilking Erie/Crawford District Consultant

Erie library seeks input on plan - Erie Times-News (PA) - November 1, 2019 - page 3

November 1, 2019 | Erie Times-News (PA) | By Times-News staff | Page 3

The locations for the fiction and nonfiction sections could switch at Blasco Library, and the Erie County Public library wants input on whether those and other changes should occur.

The library system is seeking public comment on its master plan, which includes a proposal to move the fiction section and public internet lab at the Blasco Library to the first floor and the nonfiction section to the second floor. The public comment period runs from Friday through Nov. 22.

Switching the locations of the sections and the internet lab at the Raymond M. Blasco, M.D., Memorial Library “will lend greater accessibility to frequently used services and allow for a more traditional quiet space on the second floor,” the library system said in a statement. “Revisions will be completed in stages based on acquisition of funds.”

The library system’s director, Blane Dessy, said in the statement that “the master plan has been in place for several years, and the library is taking this opportunity to update the cost estimates and gain public feedback on planned revisions before progressing.”

Comment cards on the master plan will be available at Blasco Library and the library system’s four other locations, where large display boards about the master plan will be on view, the library system said. Information on an online survey will be available at the locations and at www.erialibrary.org.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

staff, By Times-News. "Erie library seeks input on plan." Erie Times-News (PA), EDT ed., sec. PA News, 1 Nov. 2019, p. 3. NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and Current, infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/176EF78079D3E0F8. Accessed 1 Nov. 2019.

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Erie poetry event revisits ‘Spoon River’ - By - Erie Times-News (PA) - November 7, 2019 - page 14

November 7, 2019 | Erie Times-News (PA) | Contributing writer | Page 14

“One was burned in a mine/One was killed in a brawl/One died in a jail/One fell from a bridge toiling for children and wife/All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill,” Edgar Lee Masters wrote in 1915 of the residents of Oak Hill Cemetery.

His work, “Spoon River Anthology,” became a classic not of horror but of poetry. Erie County Poet Laureate Chuck Joy is a fan of the nearly 250 free-verse poems in which the dead of Spoon River, Illinois, speak their truth about their lives and times, and on Wednesday, he will moderate a symposium on Masters’ landmark work at the Blasco Library.

“It’s deeply tragic, yet written as startlingly contemporary poetry, and that’s an unusual combination,” Joy said of the work. “It appealed to the poet that I am and the person that I am.”

The event, and the staged reading of some of the poems that will follow in January, are part of an ambitious programming effort planned by Joy, a psychiatrist, for his second consecutive one-year term as poet laureate.

Joy found an ally in Erie County Public Library Director Blane Dessy, who has long admired the anthology. “I found it to be moving, compelling and sad — and also quite funny in places,” he said.

At the symposium, Greg Brown, of Mercyhurst University; Steve Sullivan, of Edinboro University and Matthew Darling, of Gannon University, will explore the importance of Masters’ work and the context in which it was written. They will also respond to audience questions in a panel discussion.

“It was an amazingly powerful piece that resonated with me—and it still does,” Dessy said of “Spoon River,” a work that he thinks has lessons for us today.

“What it means for Erie at this moment is that we need to reflect on ... how each person, with stories, told or untold, is a complex individual who can contribute to the greater good,” he said.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

writer, Contributing. "Erie poetry event revisits 'Spoon River' By John Chacona." Erie Times-News (PA), ESC ed., sec. PA Features, 7 Nov. 2019, p. 14. NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and

Current, infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?

p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1770F5CF11E475A8. Accessed 8 Nov. 2019.

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By Heather Cass - Erie Times-News (PA) - November 10, 2019 - page 1

November 10, 2019 | Erie Times-News (PA) | Contributing writer | Page 1

The hottest new trend in entertainment is nothing new. In fact, podcasts have been around since the invention of the iPod, which has already come and gone, thanks primarily to the rise of the smartphone.

Somehow, though, podcasts not only survived the death of the iPod, but also have thrived in the age of streaming digital content and smartphones.

The latest statistics from Podcast Insights estimate that 48 percent of the U.S. population has listened to a podcast. It's a medium that has exploded in popularity in the last several years. Case in point: In April of 2018, there were an estimated 525,000 active podcasts. One year later, that number increased to 750,000, with more being added daily.

What is a podcast?

A podcast is like a talk radio show, but it is recorded as a digital audio file that is distributed over the internet rather than the airwaves. Listeners simply download or stream the episodes they want to listen to.

How does one do that? Originally on an iPod, but today the vast majority of listeners access their favorite podcasts through a smartphone app, such as Stitcher, Podcast Addict or Apple/Google Podcasts.

After adding the application, download an episode or two and, voila, you're learning all about knitting or celebrities or trees or insects or mushrooms or anything else that interests you.

Whatever it is you are into, you will find a podcast about it. There are no rules regarding length or format. Some podcasts are a few minutes long, others are nearly two hours, though the average is about 40 to 45 minutes.

Podcasts also may contain content some listeners would find offensive.

What's the appeal?

For some, listening to podcasts is about entertainment. For others, it's about staying up-to-date on current events, learning about new things, reminiscing about days gone by or distracting themselves from menial tasks. There are as many reasons to listen as there are listeners.

“Podcasts are a great way to get somewhat boring things, like cleaning, driving or running, done while getting lost in a story at the same time,” said Susan Ellsworth, a podcast listener from Erie.

“When you're busy and on-the-go, podcasts are a great way to stay caught up on pertinent information,” said podcast listener Mike Lawrence of Millcreek Township. “But they are also a good way to just enjoy your favorite subjects or learn new and interesting things.”

Laura Merritt, of Harborcreek Township, said she listens to podcasts because they serve as a much needed distraction. “One ear bud in and a good podcast gets me through a lot of things I otherwise might not enjoy,” she said. “I also like being able to tune out the news and forget about all things that are wrong with the world and just get lost a good conversation or story. ‘Kind World’ is my current favorite podcast.”

Who podcasts?

(Lots of your friends and neighbors)

When Erie musician Tyler Smilo found himself listening to podcasts

more than he was making or listening to music, he knew he had to do something about it.

“I kept thinking about how cool it would be to do a podcast at a local level,” Smilo said. “I know many artists in the area who have a lot to say that can’t be covered in another way. I mean, nobody would want to read a five-page story, but they’ll listen to an hour-long podcast.”

Smilo and a friend, Luke Kuzmish, started “Sink, Swim or Fly,” a podcast featuring interesting and influential people in the region chatting about music, art or recovery from drug and alcohol addiction.

Smilo is in recovery and knows the healing power of hearing from people who have overcome addiction.

He and Kuzmish recorded a handful of episodes before Kuzmish bowed out due to increasing personal responsibilities. Smilo, however, went all in. He recently bought his own recording equipment, investing about \$200. He plans to record several episodes a month, which he uploads to a free online podcast platform where it’s made available to podcast listeners worldwide.

Yes, it’s that easy to have your own podcast. And, in Erie, if you have a library card, you don’t even have to buy your own equipment, you can simply borrow time in the main library’s recording studio, which is equipped with everything you need to start recording.

DIY podcasting

“The media studio fits with the library’s general mission of making not only knowledge, but also resources publicly available,” said Patrick Moran, Idea Lab Makerspace technician at Blasco Library, 160 E. Front St. “So if someone has a great idea for a podcast, they can easily have access to quality studio equipment to make it happen.”

The library’s studio is used for video and audio recording projects, but Moran said it is soon getting a podcast-specific soundboard. Patrons can reserve the space for up to two hours a day as much as a month in advance. Reservations can be made online, in person or over the phone.

“You can also just show up and use it anytime it’s not reserved or in use,” he said. He estimates the studio is currently booked 12 to 15 times a week.

Smilo and Moran said the equipment is straightforward and a variety of recording programs range from intuitive (such as Audacity, a program in which you just press record and talk) to more complex programs that allow for elaborate editing and effects.

“If you just want to record your voice, you can be up and running in five minutes,” Moran said. “If you want to do editing, add in sound bites or do fade in and outs, the only limit is the time and patience you have to play around and teach yourself.”

Another option for self-recording can be found at Community Access Media, 142 W. 12th St., which has a full podcasting studio. You take a class on how to use the equipment. For more information, visit www.camerie.org.

Heather Cass is a freelancer who works as the Publication Manager at Penn State Behrend. She’s a podcast lover who highly recommends any podcast from NPR, but especially “Fresh Air” and “How I Built This.”

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

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