



Library Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, May 19, 2022
ZOOM: 983 3133 2641 | Passcode: 821018
12:00 pm

Allen
Rosenthal
Pearson

Murphy
Tempestini
Knuth

Boam
Conway
Aoh

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Minutes – April 21, 2022**
3. **Library Reports**
 - a. Library Staff reports
 - b. Report of Director
 - c. Review of Financial Report
 - d. Statistical and Other Reports
 - e. Report of District Consultant
4. **Board and Committee Reports**
 - a. Report of County Council Liaison
 - b. Report of Friends and ERLF
5. **Unfinished Business**
6. **New Business**
7. **Adjournment**
8. **Appendix**
 - a. Announcements
 - b. News Articles

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes – April 21, 2022
3. Library Reports

a. Library Staff reports

Youth Services- Shane Donaldson- Youth Services & Summer Reading update.

b. Report of Director

c. Review of Financial Report

See attachment

d. Statistical and Other Reports

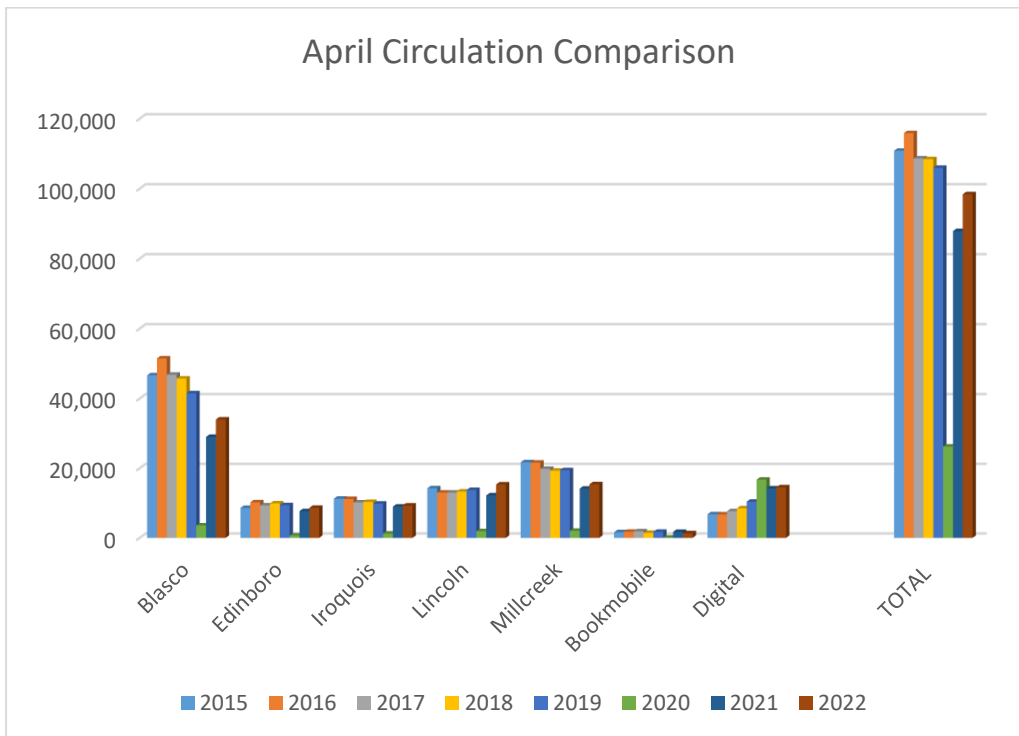


April 2022 Statistics

Numbers Snapshot

- **425** new cards issued, including **74** e-cards
- **4,217** Wi-Fi logins, increase of **51** from March
- **2,712** computer sessions, **1,922** hours used
- **27,162** patron visits, up by **6,400** from April 2021

Circulation



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Blasco	46,639	51,440	46,815	45,707	41,479	3,576	28,988	33,980
Edinboro	8,587	10,196	9,300	9,885	9,364	680	7,666	8,611
Iroquois	11,246	11,164	10,164	10,302	9,812	1,237	8,962	9,276
Lincoln	14,239	12,982	12,994	13,298	13,738	1,919	12,197	15,316
Millcreek	21,704	21,590	19,805	19,296	19,427	2,023	14,130	15,386
Bookmobile	1,619	1,754	1,891	1,444	1,731	54	1,712	1,312
Digital	6,765	6,721	7,654	8,478	10,379	16,710	14,191	14,493
TOTAL	110,799	115,847	108,623	108,410	105,930	26,199	87,846	98,374

e. Report of District Consultant

District Consultant Report for LAB as of 5/17

- The district passed the 2022-2023 negotiated agreement and budget on Tuesday, May 17. This agreement lays out member responsibilities to receive district services and the responsibilities of the district library center to provide services to member libraries. District services include interlibrary loan delivery, materials and kits for implementing library programs, consulting services with the district consultant, rotating Playaway and large print collections, and e-resources through Libby such as Crafts, LawDepot, and Universal Class.
- The directors from Erie County libraries continue to work through revisions of the Standards of Operations, which lay out the procedures for handling patrons and library materials when they use other libraries within the county. We are also diving into “What if…” scenarios to see if the procedures seem appropriate for situations. We will also be reviewing the Public Libraries of Erie County (PLEC) MOU agreement in the near future.
- Training opportunities for staff, trustees, Friends, and Foundation members
 - Recording: Advocacy, Your Library, and Your Community! with PANO & SNOE Region: [LINK](#)
 - Recording: Overcoming the Barriers to Fundraising Successes with Chad Barger & SNOE Region: [LINK](#)
 - Upcoming Training: Fundraising for Trustees & Volunteers: Monday, May 23 @ 7 p.m. (via Zoom) [REGISTRATION LINK](#)

4. Board and Committee Reports

- a. Report of County Council Liaison
- b. Report of Friends and ERLF

5. Unfinished Business

6. New Business

7. Adjournment

8. Appendix

a. Announcements

Reminder: Board members invited to participate in Outreach Advisory Committee. Committee will meet at conclusion of regular board meeting.

b. News Articles

Be sure to read the attached histERIE article by Liz Allen.

Erie County Public Library Summer Reading Challenge 2022 & 1000 Books Before Kindergarten

The Erie County Public Library's 2022 Summer Reading Challenge launches Monday, June 13th and runs through Saturday, August 13th, 2022!

The library encourages Erie County readers of all ages to register for the Summer Reading Challenge. Participants complete the challenge by reading for a minimum of 10 hours and participating in activities throughout a 2-month period. Readers earn accomplishment badges by logging their reading time, writing book reviews, and trying activities. Collect all of the virtual badges to complete the Summer Reading Challenge.

Participants may log time spent reading or listening to written material in any format. This includes books, eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, graphic novels, and comics.

Children ages birth - Pre-K can also participate in the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program. This year-round literacy effort encourages caregivers to share 1,000 books with their child before the first day of Kindergarten. The most important predictor of school success is being read to at home during early childhood. Help your child get a great head start!

The Summer Reading Challenge and 1000 Books Before Kindergarten will be hosted on Beanstack, an interactive online platform used to track accomplishments and issue badges. A convenient app called "Beanstack Tracker" can be installed on smartphones. Paper tracking forms will be available at all ECPL locations for readers who do not plan to use the Beanstack platform.

Age categories for the ECPL Summer Reading Challenge are 0-5, 6-12, 13-17 and 18+. All participants in each age group will be eligible for a prize drawing (to be announced) on August 16th, 2022. There will be grand prize drawings for each age category at each ECPL location.

This annual program is made possible through the generous support of the Friends of the Erie County Public Library and Macaroni Kid Erie.

For more information, please contact the Youth Services department at 814-451-6936 or email library-reference@eriecountypa.gov.

Study: Public eyes changes for Millcreek Branch **Library**

Community would like to see more space, amenities for location

A.J. Rao
Erie Times-News
USA TODAY NETWORK

More space. More amenities. And somewhere near the Millcreek Mall.

That's what the public wants in a renovated Millcreek branch of the Erie County Public **Library**, according to Bostwick Design Partnership, an architectural firm that for the past year has conducted a needs assessment and feasibility study on the Millcreek Branch

Library's future.

The study, which was approved by Erie County Council in 2021 and made possible by a \$25,000 state Keystone Fund grant and a local match of \$25,000, included a series of public surveys, conceptual designs and cost estimates, said David Brennan, director of Bostwick's Erie office.

Presenting the results Thursday to Erie County Council, Brennan made clear the public's desire for a larger, more welcoming Millcreek branch, and discussed the design and potential cost of such a facility.

"It's definitely not going to be in the same location because that space is too small," Brennan said. "There's so much

activity at that branch, they just don't have the current space to do it in."

Potential upgrades

The Millcreek branch is considered the second busiest **library** in the county, trailing only the flagship Blasco Memorial **Library** on Erie's Bayfront. The branch resides in a leased space of roughly 7,000 square feet — at \$12,000 a month — within the Millcreek Mall Pavilion.

Brennan said a new Millcreek branch site — based on recommendations from the public — would be closer to 17,000

See **LIBRARY**, Page 7A



The Erie County Public **Library** Millcreek Branch **Library** is shown last year in Millcreek Township. The public has provided insight on what it would like in a renovated Millcreek branch.

GREG WOHLFORD/ERIE TIMES-NEWS FILE

Library

Continued from Page 1A

square feet, making it the largest of all the county's **library** branches.

Conceptual designs show the site having more community rooms and gathering spaces for children, teens and adults; an Idea Lab or maker space, where visitors can create materials using computers and 3-D printers; and an outdoor space for events.

"People just want a place where they can hang out — like in Blasco, where you can be by yourself or in a group setting or go to the teen area or the computer area," Brennan said. "They're really looking for it to be a gathering space."

More space, however, means a greater cost.

The study showed that minimal renovations to an extensive makeover of an existing building could cost between \$2.5 million to \$4.2 million, or between \$95 and \$175 per square foot. Constructing a new facility could range from \$7.3 to \$8 million, or between \$325 to \$350 per square foot.

Renovating an existing site could also last about six months, as opposed to new construction, which could take up to a year, according to the study.

Location?

Brennan said the public generally liked the Millcreek branch near the Millcreek Mall, citing its easy accessibility and available parking.

Based on this input, Brennan said the study looked for potential properties within a 1.5-mile radius of the mall, specifically looking for sites that could accommodate 1.5 to 2 acres of space; between 16,000 to 18,000 square feet; up to 72 parking spaces; and green space and sidewalks.

Brennan said Bostwick looked at specific buildings and properties but didn't want to publicly identify them, insisting sellers might increase their prices if they knew the county was an interested buyer.

Since the Millcreek branch's lease ends in 2025 — it's the only leased facility of the Erie County Public **Library**'s five locations — Brennan said the county still has time to determine a location.

"There are other areas of Millcreek Township that are possible," said Bren-



Erie County Public **Library** patrons use the Millcreek Branch **Library** last year in Millcreek Township. The Millcreek branch is considered the second busiest **library** in the county, trailing only the flagship Blasco Memorial **Library** on Erie's Bayfront.

GREG WOHLFORD/ERIE TIMES-NEWS FILE

nan, indicating the 1.5-mile radius was merely arbitrary. "There's definitely a need in this area around the mall but it doesn't necessarily have to be exactly in that area, we could possibly move it to Summit. It's not known yet."

What's next?

Brennan, who gave only a brief summation of the study Thursday, said Bostwick is considering a public meeting on the full report at a later date.

He voiced optimism that the county will ultimately approve funding to relocate the **library**.

"I think there's definitely a need, there's definitely the public support, it's just a matter of allocating the resources and that will be up to the county executive and County Council," he said.

County Council Vice-chairperson Mary Rennie also voiced her support.

"I don't think the branch, such as it is, truly represents the Millcreek community as well as it could," said Rennie, who is a former executive director of the Erie County Public **Library**. "I think it's time to do something that's a little more innovative, a little more updated, and I think this offers that opportunity."

Rennie said Erie County Executive Brenton Davis will likely narrow down the recommendations and bring a measure to council for a final vote.

"Is it going to happen tomorrow? No. This is going to be a long process," she said. "The funding is a question that's hanging out there too. I imagine they're going to be seeking grant funding."

A.J. Rao can be reached at arao@gannett.com. Follow him on Twitter @ETNRao.

Be Present for histERIE

Erie County Public Library rolls out new weeklong event




by Liz Allen  May 16, 2022 at 11:23 AM



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHLEEN CANTRELL

Virginia Sorensen signs copies of her book, *Miracles on Maple Hill*, at the original Erie Book Store at 17 E. Eighth St. Amy Hipple, the girl in the plaid dress, was the inspiration for Marly, the main character in *Miracles on Maple Hill*. The girl to Amy's right in the poodle skirt is Kathleen Cantrell, daughter of Erie Book Store owner Glenn Cantrell. She began working in the store at age 12, bought the store from her dad in 1979 and operated it at two different locations, on French Street and in Lovell Place, before selling it in 2011. The new owner moved locations twice before closing it in 2014.

When Marie Benedict researches her historical novels, she resembles Indiana Jones, she says. In her words, she is "excavating the past."

Thanks to Benedict's books, I've dug into the lives of Clara Kelley, a fictional Irish maid in Pittsburgh in the 1860s; Belle da Costa Greene, the remarkable African-American book-and-art acquisitions specialist who worked for J.P. Morgan in New York City in the early 1900s; and the beautiful actress Hedy Lamarr, who was also a World War II scientist and inventor in Vienna and Hollywood.

On April 2, Benedict was the keynote speaker at the [Mercyhurst University Literary Festival](#), in a talk cosponsored by the [Erie Friends of the Library](#) and the [Erie Branch of the American Association of University Women](#).

Looking back on that lovely literary interlude, I realized that Benedict's presentation served as an informal yet pertinent preview for a new Erie County Public Library initiative: [histERIE Week 2022](#), taking place May 22-28. This event, which may become annual, showcases how libraries are both repositories of history and vehicles to make that history relevant today.

During histERIE week, more than three dozen programs will be offered at Blasco Library, library branches, and historic venues, attractions, and

neighborhoods in the City of Erie and Erie County. There will be walking tours, a bicycle ride, movies, hands-on and take-home activities, museum tours, and virtual events. If you attend at least four events, you will be eligible for a prize.

The local people contributing to histERIE week include creator Courtney Baran and program participant Jan Woods. Both women have a talent for fusing history, storytelling, and sense of place into unique experiences and educational adventures, and they each can trace their love of history to treasured books with Erie connections.



Courtney Baran, digital collections librarian for the Erie County Public Library, curates exhibits that highlight Erie history for the Michele Ridge Galleria, on the second floor of Blasco Library. Ridge was the former director of the library. The current display features Erie's New American community.

For Baran, 28, that book is Stephen E. Ambrose's classic nonfiction work *Band of Brothers*, which she read when attending Seneca Valley High School in Cranberry, Pa. She didn't know then that she would eventually marry her husband Andy and move to Erie, home to three members of the World War II *Band of Brothers paratroopers in *Easy Company*: the late Ed Bernat, Edward Joint, and Joe Lesniewski.

Baran originally wanted to become a teacher. After earning a master's degree in public history, writing her thesis comparing Erie's war memorials to those in Pittsburgh, and interning at the Erie Maritime Museum and the Erie Art Museum, she found her niche at the Erie library, starting as an assistant and now serving as the digital collections librarian.

If you visit the Michele Ridge Galleria on Blasco's second floor, in the corridor that leads to the Heritage Room, you can see examples of Baran's nods to Erie history. Exhibits change three times a year, and recent ones have highlighted the Pontiacs, Erie's Black baseball team, and the 100-year anniversary of Presque Isle State Park. This is where I spotted an old brochure, probably from the 1940s, touting the Erie Coach Company's service to the peninsula. The photo of a bathing beauty in a bikini was certain to bring attention to the bus company's schedule, touting its service from 10th and State streets to the beach on Saturdays, Sundays, Wednesdays and holidays.

The current "Welcoming Erie" exhibit, showcasing Erie's New Americans, demonstrates that local history is fluid and evolving. The display features stunning fashions designed by Erie tailor Ansuma Gbembo, originally from Sierra Leone. Coming soon: a look back at Erie's one-room schoolhouses.

Baran came up with the idea for histERIE, including the play on Erie's name, to celebrate Historic Preservation Month in May. For Baran, historic preservation isn't just for professionals who work in that field. "HistERIE's goal is to promote historic preservation from a community level ... what makes us a community, what helps to preserve our story," she said.



Jan Woods, founder of Hurry Hill Farm and Museum in Edinboro, shows off a cabinet filled with memorabilia associated with Anne Beiler, the Edinboro school nurse and truant officer who made house calls if kids missed school. Beiler was the real-life model for Miss Annie, the stern but goodhearted school nurse in Miracles on Maple Hill, the award-winning children's novel set in Edinboro.

That link between historic preservation and a community's narrative resonates with Jan Woods. A longtime Erie school principal in Northwest Pennsylvania, Woods, 74, retired early to spend more time with her two children (now adults) and to focus on the avocation she learned as a child on her family's Edinboro farm: being a sugarmaker. That's a skill that requires both science and art.

Since 2009, she and partner Lisa Nathanson have run Woods' family homestead, [Hurry Hill Maple Farm](#) and Museum at 11424 Fry Road in Edinboro.

I literally got a taste of what the museum offers (for sale or to sample) when Woods treated me to individual paper thimbles filled with clear maple-sugar sap, maple cream, maple crumbs, maple barbecue sauce, and maple mustard. You will never want to eat stiff and stale pastel cotton candy after you've tried the heavenly spun confection that the museum makes and sells (\$3 for a quart container, \$5 for a bag).

In addition to maple-infused foods, you can buy other gift items, including [Miracles on Maple Hill](#), by Virginia Sorensen. Written in 1954 when Sorensen lived in Edinboro, published in 1956, and winner of the prestigious John Newberry Medal for distinguished children's literature in 1957, *Miracles on Maple Hill should have been on my reading radar when I was a kid.

But the book meant even more to me when I read it a few months ago. Now I understand why Woods has made it her life's work to tell youngsters and adults alike about this tender story, why it touches her heart, and how Erie area readers will delight in recognizing the Edinboro locale, complete with legendary snowfalls.

"The story of *Miracles on Maple Hill was always part of my life because our family made pure maple syrup and the book was written about our corner of Pennsylvania. Each spring, that book came alive in our sugarhouse," Woods said. "I have been told that Mrs. Sorensen came to our classroom and read it to us. I wasn't there! I had chickenpox," she recalled.

The book's characters were real Edinboro residents. They include Amy Hipple Bjork and her brother, Karl, whose fictional names are Marly and Joe. Mr. Chris and his wife Chrissie are based on sugarmakers Harvey and Amy Kreitz, while Harry the Hermit was inspired by the reclusive Tony Beigel.

At the museum, you will learn that Sorensen, a Utah native, lived in Edinboro in the 1950s when her husband taught English at Edinboro College. You can see the technique that the book's illustrators, Philadelphia artists Beth and Joe Krush, used for the book's black-and-white and colorized art. If you recognize their style, it's because they also illustrated *[The Borrowers series](#) and the *Golden Picture Dictionary.

You can hold Sorensen's hallowed Newberry Medal in your hands as you absorb the museum's lessons about John Newberry's mission a century ago to create juvenile libraries, filled with quality literature for youngsters who previously were limited to reading the Bible and nursery rhymes.

Explore the many artifacts that are part of the tactile history of *Miracles on Maple Hill – the massive RFD mailbox that belonged to Mr. Chris; household furnishings from Mr. Chris and Chrissie; implements used to collect sap to cook and process maple syrup; portraits, photographs and news clippings about Sorensen; the script for a play starring Miss Annie, the formidable but caring school nurse whose real name was Anne Beiler; and examples of the unbroken wooden chains carved by Beagle (the Hermit).

At hurryhillfarm.org, you will find directions for a driving tour of the Edinboro landmarks described in the book, including Mount Pleasant ski resort, which is Maple Hill. There is also a guide to a walking tour of the farmland.

But you won't truly appreciate your virtual or in-person visit if you haven't read the book, available throughout the Erie County Public Library system, by a free audio version online on the museum's website, and sold at the museum.

I checked out "Miracles on Maple Hill" from the Edinboro library branch, after driving by the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission marker installed nearby to honor Sorensen and her prize-winning book.

I didn't expect to become a fangirl of a children's book that is nearly as old as I am.

But after reading "Miracles on Maple Hill," I've recommended it to family and friends. In today's world, we desperately need reminders about the restorative powers that await if we are kind to others and pay attention to their joys and their hardships, such as the shellshock (now called PTSD) that Marly's father suffered after World War II.

Miracles abound in this story and real-life: spotting wildflowers in the woods, listening to bird calls in the backyard, watching young foxes frolic in a ravine. And, of course, that satisfying sensation of dribbling an intoxicating sample of pure maple syrup down your gullet.

Liz Allen will do a walking tour of Lincoln Avenue for histERIE on May 26 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For the complete event schedule, visit <https://eriecounty-pa.libguides.com/histerie>. You can reach her at lizallenerie@gmail.com.

If You Go

Visit eriecounty-pa.libguides.com/histerie for details about histERIE 2022 and to learn whether registration is required or recommended for programs. Most events are free, but some have a charge or ask for a donation.

Hurry Hill Maple Farm and Museum, 11424 Fry Road, Edinboro, will be open from noon to 4 p.m. on three Sundays this month: May 15, May 22 and May 29, before closing until September. On May 22nd, the museum will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Newberry Medal, awarded to the "most distinguished contribution to American literature for children." The children's book "Miracles on Maple Hill," set in Northwestern Pennsylvania and written by former Edinboro resident Virginia Sorensen, received the Newberry Medal in 1957.

You can see the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Marker highlighting Sorensen, "Miracles on Maple Hill," and the maple sugar industry in Erie and Crawford counties on Route 6N, near the Edinboro branch of the Erie County Public Library.

Did You Know?

The Personal Librarian, a historical novel by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray, is based on the real-life of Belle da Costa Greene. Due to rampant racism, Greene felt compelled to conceal her Black identity by passing for White and claiming to be part Portuguese when J.P. Morgan hired her to maintain and upgrade his book and art collection.

Readers will easily recognize those same systemically racist attitudes and practices at work in society today.

But local history buffs will also spot a reference in Benedict's book that has an Erie connection. "So do you like our McKim, Mead and White design," Morgan asks Miss Greene as he boasts about his opulent new library. "Lucky that we worked with McKim instead of White, isn't it?"

Morgan was referring to the prestigious architectural firm that included Stanford White, who designed Washington Square Arch in New York City. Harry Thaw of Pittsburgh, obsessed because his wife had once been White's girlfriend, shot White to death at Madison Square Garden in 1906. Found guilty by reason of insanity, Thaw was sentenced to 10 years in a state hospital for the criminally insane in Pennsylvania. Per the Mercyhurst University archives, several years after Thaw's 1947 death, Mother Borgia Egan, founding dean of Mercyhurst, purchased 20-foot-high bronze gates from Thaw's estate for the bargain price of \$600. Today, the gates still stand at the university's entrance on East 38th Street.