

# Branch Highlights: December 2023

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Administrator for Public Services



## Branch Statistics

Visitors	19,856
Circulation	33,298
Computer Use	2,741
Reference	2,354
Programs	118
Program Attendance	987

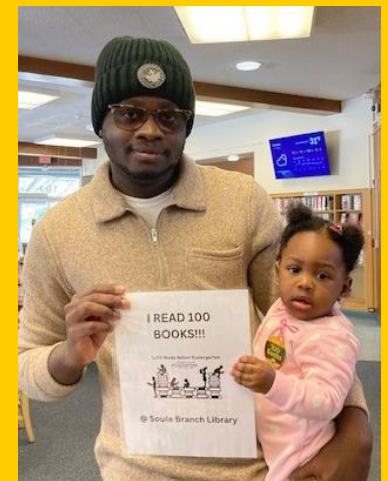
## Services & Collection

- ❖ **Grants:** Soule is applying for a CLRC Catalyst Grant for inclusive gaming programs, Paine is applying for a TNT Grant for summer music programs, and Carol is coordinating a Literacy Coalition Champions Grant for Central and all the branches to update Early Reader collections and provide training to staff on the Science of Reading.

## Programs

### For Children & Teens

- ❖ **The Principles of Kwanzaa @ Beauchamp Branch:** Storyteller Vanessa Johnson shared the history of the Kwanzaa celebration.
- ❖ **RetroGameCon @ Beauchamp Branch:** A group of children and teens enjoyed retro gaming at the library, including tabletop and video games.
- ❖ **Storytime @ Betts Branch:** Pat honored all the early winter holidays in her weekly December storytimes. She shared books



about solstice, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa, sang “Jingle Bells” and read about the Gingerbread Man all throughout the month.

- ❖ **Winter Craft @ Betts Branch:** Colette put together a very cute Newspaper Polar Bear craft. She collected old newspapers and made head, ears, and nose cutouts, and kids had a great time putting together their own polar bears.
- ❖ **Magic Science @ Mundy Branch:** Ron Cain’s Fizztastic Magic Science Show was a hit! Favorite illusions included inducing current from a plasma ball light into a compact fluorescent bulb and making his Lion’s Mane Bunny appear.
- ❖ **Recycling @ Paine Branch:** Lisa from OCRRA returned to the library to help school-age children become recycling pros with a fun activity.
- ❖ **Holiday Bells @ Paine Branch:** Kicking off the holiday break with a fun craft, kids and families could stop by the library to make a holiday bell decoration.
- ❖ **Anime Yoga @ Soule Branch:** Teen and tween participants made connections between admired anime characters and positive attributes like strength and courage, linking them through yoga poses. Patrons were also thrilled to see manga books on display at the program, and happily checked out armfuls!

### *For Adults*

- ❖ **Quilting Group @ Beauchamp Branch:** The group meets every Saturday to work on individual and collective quilting projects.
- ❖ **Workforce Development @ Beauchamp Branch:** Library staff assisted 11 patrons in December with job searches, applications, and resume development.
- ❖ **Live Music @ Betts Branch:** In December, the library welcomed A Brass Act, a trombone quartet who put on a wonderful performance for 25 attendees.
- ❖ **Knitting Groups @ Betts Branch:** The Hooks and Needles group met every Saturday with 45 attendees, and the Beginning Knitting Group met on Wednesdays with 32 attendees.
- ❖ **Adult Yoga Series @ Paine Branch:** The class met twice in December, offering attendees some relaxation and respite from the stresses of daily life and the winter season.
- ❖ **Live Harp Performance @ Paine Branch:** Local harp player Rachel Radicello stopped by the library and shared the beautiful sounds of this special instrument for the holidays.
- ❖ **Holiday Programs @ Soule Branch:** Patrons enjoyed mixing their own custom-flavored hot cocoa to enjoy at home, and creating personalized holiday greeting cards for friends and family.

### *For All Ages*

- ❖ **DIY Snow Globes @ Hazard Branch:** Families used recycled jars and miniature figures to create their own snow globes. Adding glitter, water, and glycerin made the snow globes sparkly and magical, and everyone was excited to take their projects home.
- ❖ **Gingerbread House Day @ Hazard Branch:** The library hosted their annual event where patrons of all ages created gingerbread houses while watching “The Polar Express”.
- ❖ **Woodland Creature Sewing @ Petit Branch:** Patrons of all ages were invited to craft a small, simple woodland creature with craft felt and embroidery floss. Family members helped each other, and everyone was excited to take home their special project.
- ❖ **Read to Chuck the Service Dog @ Soule Branch:** While tweens from Elmcrest enjoyed practicing their literacy skills reading to Chuck, an adult with mental health struggles was also

introduced to the world of service dogs. He was able to speak with Chuck's owner Gladys about the process and responsibilities that come with ownership of a service dog.

## City-Wide

### ❖ **Holiday Break Week Activities**

- Beauchamp welcomed storyteller Vanessa Johnson to talk about the history of Kwanzaa, and Children's Librarian Christina had supplies and instructions for making a special Kwanzaa-themed painting.
- Hazard hosted a program with docents from the Everson Museum featuring an art project inspired by a current Everson exhibit by artist Pepe Mar. Patrons recreated the vibe of a Pepe Mar collage using magazines, paper, fabric, and markers. They also had a Mario Party where families could watch the new Super Mario Bros. movie, make Mario-themed crafts, and enjoy some light refreshments.
- Mundy patron Sebastian Moore once again gave the local children a big Christmas surprise when he brought Santa for a visit to the library and gave each child a toy to take home. Sebastian collects toys throughout the year and gives them away at the Determination Center and now Mundy Branch Library.
- Paine Branch kept things fun all week long with special decoration crafts, a program to make yummy reindeer treats, and an indoor snowball fight.
- Tamice hosted a delicious gingerbread house making program over the winter break using graham crackers, frosting, and candy decorations.

## Staff

- ❖ This month Beauchamp Branch welcomed Alexander Schulz to their team as a part-time librarian assistant. Alexander will be working with the community to provide tech help and teen programs. We also said goodbye to Ann Horan, who retired as a Librarian I from White Branch. She will be sorely missed!

## Outreach & Collaboration

- ❖ Several branch managers joined Dawn and me in attending CLRC's Legislative Breakfast at Westhill High School on December 8. The event was held in the school's beautifully renovated library, and the highlight of the day was listening to poster presentations by groups of students on library science topics.
- ❖ In early December, I received a question from a library in Wyoming about our Telehealth Booth. This is one of several inquiries we've gotten from libraries across the country about our booths. It's wonderful to feel that we have pioneered a new service at our city libraries that other areas want to model! We have been able to pass along documentation, information about usage, and information about the company's installation of the booth at our libraries.
- ❖ I connected with Jess Miller, who is working on a kitchen literacy program at Salt City Market. The majority of the program involves paid classes, but she is also including free classes for high school students. Jess was wondering if there were potential library collaborations, so we discussed the possibility of having the chefs from her series do programs at Central and other branch libraries for free in addition to the paid classes at Salt City Market.

- ❖ Tim Frazee from the Syracuse Memory Café reached out to invite me to attend their January program, in response to an email I sent asking for advice on starting a program at the library.

### *Southside*

- ❖ **Beauchamp Branch** participated in the annual Southside Tree Lighting event with a special reception inside the library following the tree lighting, with a visit from Santa Claus. There were over 80 people in attendance, including Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens.
- ❖ Two classrooms from Clary Middle School visited **Betts Branch** to experience a public library. Pat quizzed the students about differences between a school and public library, issued some cards, and answered questions. Colette had a special bead craft in the teen area that the kids enjoyed, as well as the community puzzle and the Lego table in the children's area. It was a good introduction for everyone!

### *Westside*

- ❖ **Hazard Branch** received some lovely thank-yous from their community in December. During Shauna's story time visit at Parkview Junior Academy, the classroom presented her with a beautiful Christmas card that the students had made themselves. And a thank-you letter to library staff and patrons was printed in St. Mark's monthly newsletter to their parishioners, expressing gratitude to the library for collecting and delivering winter items for the church's December Clothes Closets.
- ❖ Charlie and Zulay from **Mundy Branch** had a blast with Bilingual Holiday Bingo at Providence House in December. There were 14 participants, and many of them were native Spanish speakers. This event is a great example of how a library can truly reach out into its community and enrich people's lives.

### *Eastside*

- ❖ **Paine Branch** Children's Librarian Susan Cox had a very busy December. She started a new partnership with the Head Start Program on James Street, planned collaborative story times with the Syracuse City Parks for January, and wrote a review of Stephanie Land's book Class for the *Library Journal* audio supplement.
- ❖ Simcha, Adult Services Librarian at **Petit Branch**, organized a donation event so patrons could donate items for move-in packages for new tenants of nearby VanKeuren Square Veterans Housing. Housing Vision's Veteran Housing program is dedicated to those who are experiencing or are at-risk of experiencing homelessness, and the items collected at Petit helped create move-in packages with cleaning supplies, toiletries, bedding, and more.
- ❖ Sarah O'Neill, Adult Services Librarian at **Soule Branch**, had fruitful planning meetings with several local organizations in December. She will soon start a monthly outreach program at the DeWitt Food Pantry with Sara Jo Brandt of the Community Library of DeWitt and Jamesville; she partnered with Q. Spicer, Events Coordinator at Play the Game Read the Story for a special gaming event, and she partnered with staff from Advocates Inc. and Exceptional Family Resources to promote a gaming program for adults with disabilities.

### *Northside*

- ❖ Jackie and I met at **White Branch** in early December with a group of staff from the Syracuse-Onondaga Food System Alliance (SOFSA) about the potential for installing a community fridge at

the library. White Branch already has a small community food exchange program and has partnered with SOFSA on other initiatives. They are hoping to get some grant money to install the fridge near the library's entrance, and to partner with the American Heart Association on programs that promote healthy eating. Kaley and Sean did a job fair outreach event at CYO this month and had over 100 visitors stop by their table to learn about ways the library can help with job searches. In the following weeks, several people stopped by the library for job help, saying that they had seen OCPL at the job fair and wanted to see what the library was all about. And Kaley and Tamice stopped by ITC High School's Holiday Family Engagement Night to help the kids create inclusive holiday buttons and chat about library services.

## Stories & Highlights

- ❖ **Petit Branch:** Helping our readers find the perfect book is always a joy for librarians, and Petit staff are often called on for readers' advisory help. In December Hannah was having a conversation with a colleague about how much she loves the work of Frank Baum when a tween patron happened to come in and ask if there were more books in the Oz series. Hannah was able to find three books for her, as well as the sequel to [Alice in Wonderland](#). In addition, Hannah gifted the patron a copy of Frank Baum's [The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus](#), which she had purchased from Petit's ongoing book sale. Hannah remarked how lovely it was to introduce a young patron to a series and author she has loved for decades.
- ❖ **Soule Branch:** Soule staff made special connections with patrons of all ages in the month of December. Two patrons commented that the DIY card making program was a welcome opportunity to make a personalized card to add to their office Secret Santa gifts, and one of them came back a few days later to report that the card she made for her co-worker was a very pleasant surprise. Librarian Sarah O'Neill chatted with a teen patron who asked if he could show her his sketch book. They looked at each of his drawings and discussed the inspiration, his favorite anime shows, and new techniques he'd learned. His friend came over and also shared his sketchbook and his interest in drawing clothing. Sarah encouraged them both to keep drawing and to come to a manga drawing activity at the library in February.