

# Branch Highlights: November 2023

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Administrator for Public Services



## Branch Statistics

Visitors	24,079
Circulation	30,811
Computer Use	2,707
Reference	2,294
Programs	125
Program Attendance	1,286

## Services & Collection

- ❖ **Grants:** Sarah O'Neill from Soule Branch met with Rebecca Kluberanz Honsinger of CLRC to discuss a pre-application for a CLRC Catalyst Grant to fund a community and inclusive gaming collection and program. This service would be designed to suit a wide range of ages, abilities, and skill levels, with a particular focus on seniors and people living with disabilities.
- ❖ **Betts Branch:** Teen LA Colette is working on getting titles for a special poetry collection for teens. She has ordered new books, including *You Don't Have to be Everything: Poems for Girls* by Becoming Themselves, *Light Filter in Poems* by Carolina Kaufman, and *We Rise: The Civil Rights Movement in Poems*. Colette has decided to put this special poetry section near the Graphic Novels, and to include some fiction novels that take the form of long free-verse poems as well, such as *Blood Moon* by Patricia Kirkpatrick, and *Everybody Looking* by Candice Iloh.



# Programs

## For Children

- ❖ **1,000 Books Before Kindergarten @ Beauchamp Branch:** Beauchamp's program is going strong, with 63 kids registered and reading a total of 222 books!
- ❖ **Jeff the Magic Man @ Beauchamp Branch:** Jeff entertained 15 kids, 5 teens, and 11 adults with magic tricks and balloon twisting fun.
- ❖ **Story Time @ Beauchamp Branch:** This month, Christina shared stories with a group of 6 kids and 4 adults, and another 13 kids enjoyed special crafts and play stations at the library.
- ❖ **Storytime @ Betts Branch:** In November, Pat shared books about hibernating and late fall, and a poem about giving thanks, to a wonderful audience of 164 kids and 22 adults over 4 sessions.
- ❖ **Salt Dough Dinosaur Fossils @ Hazard Branch:** To celebrate "DiNovember" staff created fun dinosaur fossils using salt dough and mini dinosaur figures. Kids had a great time getting their hands dirty to make the salt dough and made some really fun designs for their projects.
- ❖ **Stop, Drop and Stories @ Mundy Branch:** A pause in regularly scheduled library activities for Mr. Charlie to read a story, to help inject a literacy component into the time kids and teens spend after school at Mundy. Charlie had 4 sessions in November, with 3 kids at each session.
- ❖ **Turkey Scavenger Hunt @ Mundy Branch:** Jessica had 42 young patrons participate in this scavenger hunt where 18 turkeys were hidden around the library, and once a turkey was located the participants wrote the letter corresponding to each numbered blank to reveal a hidden message about gratitude.
- ❖ **Make It @ Mundy Branch:** 15 children practiced reading skills by reading books about Thanksgiving, as well as reading a recipe, then they practiced measuring, mixing, and food safety skills while preparing a delicious no-bake pumpkin pie.
- ❖ **Weekly Clubs @ Mundy Branch:** In addition to weekly storytimes for children, Mundy also offers Crafternoons with different projects each week such as beaded bracelets, Diya lamps for Diwali, and Turkey crafts; Lego Club, with free play and themed challenges; and Board Game Café, where families can gather and play new games as well as old favorites.
- ❖ **Storytime @ Petit Branch:** Children's librarian Quinn and Petit LA Hannah conducted four storytimes in November with an attendance of 43.
- ❖ **The Young Naturalists @ Petit Branch:** The group was back for the season presenting science & nature programming at Petit. They introduced children to Pangea and the concept of shifting continental plates.

## For Teens

- ❖ **Teen Career Club @ Beauchamp Branch:** In partnership with the Syracuse City School District, Beauchamp holds a Career Club each month to help teens develop leadership skills and learn about potential careers.
- ❖ **Teen Lounge @ Mundy Branch:** Charlie had 4 Video Game Lounge sessions, with a total of 30 teens in attendance. Teens are also working on creating a "WELCOME" banner in the teen section. This is an ongoing project, with teens working on it individually and in groups, and they often ask Charlie to help as well.

- ❖ **Henna and Book Tasting @ Soule Branch:** Sally from SK Henna created personalized body art for teens and tweens. While their art dried, participants enjoyed a book-tasting event during which they could sample some popular high interest YA titles available from the library. Parents got some henna art as well, and Sally complimented Soule staff on the best organized library henna program she has done so far.
- ❖ **Retro Game Con @ White Branch:** This super fun retro gaming program made a return to White Branch Library, with video games, board games, and fun group play.

### *For Adults*

- ❖ **GED Classes @ Beauchamp Branch:** This month, Beauchamp offered 11 GED classes and helped a total of 44 students on their path to getting their degree.
- ❖ **Workforce Development @ Beauchamp Branch:** 12 patrons received assistance with job searches and applications, and 21 patrons received help through the Book-A-Librarian program.
- ❖ **Quilting Group @ Beauchamp Branch:** The quilting group met on 3 Saturdays in November, with a total of 17 patrons working on projects at the library.
- ❖ **Knitting Groups @ Betts Branch:** Betts has seen increasing interest in both of their knitting programs. On Saturdays, they host Hooks and Needles, which drew 42 participants over 4 sessions, and on Wednesday evenings they have Beginning Knitting with Maggie, which drew 40 participants over 5 sessions.
- ❖ **Quick Bites Charcuterie Boards @ Hazard Branch:** During November we taught patrons how to create a charcuterie board using assorted meats and cheeses along with a few other fun additions. This program was a hit with patrons of all ages and everyone left with a unique board filled with snacks to share.
- ❖ **Building a Holiday Board @ Paine Branch:** Sarah from the Curd Nurd, a cheese shop down the street from Paine, taught attendees how to assemble a charcuterie board just in time for Thanksgiving.
- ❖ **Yoga @ Paine Branch:** The library started an Adult Yoga series this month with local instructor Chelsea, who focuses on relaxing and de-stressing through gentle yoga movements.
- ❖ **The Ancient Game of Go @ Petit Branch:** Anton Ninno helped patrons learn about the history of Go, where to find sets and how to play. After the presentation, patrons could use Go sets the presenters brought to practice what they learned.
- ❖ **Puzzlemania @ Petit Branch:** 31 people participated in the library's first puzzle competition – competing to finish a 500-piece puzzle the fastest. There were prizes for the top 3 fastest finishing teams. The fastest team completed the puzzle in 29 minutes!

### *For All Ages*

- ❖ **Art Display @ Betts Branch:** In celebration of Indigenous People's Month, the Onondaga Nation School put together a beautiful art exhibit at Betts, featuring students from all grade levels pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup>. Mixed media artworks included Painted Paper Pumpkins (pre-K), Radiant Forest (1<sup>st</sup> grade), Yayoi Kusama Tie Dye Pumpkins (2<sup>nd</sup> grade), Watercolor Corn (3<sup>rd</sup> grade), Van Gogh-inspired Metallic Sunflowers (4<sup>th</sup> grade), Mountain Collage (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades), Contrast Pumpkins (7<sup>th</sup> grade), and Birch Trees (8<sup>th</sup> grade).
- ❖ **Movie Days @ Betts Branch:** Betts showed four fun movies in November, with a total attendance of 12 adults, 7 teens, and 7 kids.

- ❖ **Live Music @ Paine Branch:** The very popular jazz band Avenue J returned to Paine this month and played a variety of jazz pieces for a two-hour session that was enjoyed by patrons of all ages.
- ❖ **Family Photo Shoot @ Petit Branch:** For their second annual event, community member Toni Horrace volunteered her professional photography services at Petit Branch. Lots of familiar families and some new ones — for a total of 58 patrons — dressed up to take advantage of the free photo session outdoors at the library, and enjoyed hot cider and donuts on the chilly day.
- ❖ **Westcott Words and Music Series @ Petit Branch:** The Westcott Neighborhood Association sponsored an all ages music program that was held Thanksgiving weekend. Drummer Etse Nyadedzor shared some stories from his upbringing in Ghana that gave context to the drumming pieces he introduced to the audience, and handed out instruments so all attendees could join in on the music-making.

### *City-Wide*

- ❖ **Health Literacy @ OCPL:** Several city libraries are responding to an increasing interest in health-related programming since the COVID-19 pandemic. These libraries do regular tabling events, as well as workshops and one-on-one computer help to get patrons access to the resources they need to live healthy, active lives.
  - Betts Branch welcomes Syracuse C.A.R.E.S. on Saturdays from 10-2 for a tabling event, with information and giveaways covering a variety of public health issues including COVID-19, STDs, breast health screening, and more. Patrons appreciate and look forward to their weekly visit.
  - Paine Branch has started a new yoga class with a local instructor, focused on de-stressing and relaxing through gentle movements.
  - White Branch offers monthly health tabling events, as well as vaccinations and HIV testing through F.A.C.E.S.
- ❖ **Holiday Donation Sites**
  - Betts Branch currently has three donation programs for the holiday season: a Mitten Tree for donations of new mittens, hats and scarves; Toys for Tots, which brought in a full box of donations in November; and gently-used Halloween costumes for next year's Halloween Costume Closet.
  - Hazard Branch is collecting mittens, hats, and scarves for their Mitten Tree, with all donations given to St. Mark Church next door for their December Clothes Closet.
  - Soule Branch is collecting food and personal care items for the pantry at the Eastside Boys & Girls Club of Syracuse.
- ❖ **Memory Café:** I scheduled a meeting in December with adult programming staff from Hazard, Paine, Betts, Central to talk about bringing Memory Café's to our libraries. These are powerful programs that can help seniors with memory problems socialize, exercise their minds, and have meaningful interactions with their caregivers in a supportive environment.

## Staff

- ❖ This month Soule Branch welcomed Sarah O'Neill as their new Adult Services Librarian, and Central Library welcomed Saptarshi Lahiri as the new MakerSpace Librarian. We are excited to have these positions filled, and to welcome new people to our teams!
- ❖ Margaret Martin of Soule Branch was this year's chair of the NYLA Youth Services Section (YSS) Empire State Award Committee, and she had the honor of introducing and bestowing the 2023 Empire State Award to children's book author and illustrator Nina Crews at the award luncheon.
- ❖ White Branch welcomed Anna Shuff as their new Librarian Assistant. Anna will be supporting public services and helping the public with technology and workforce development programs.

## Outreach & Collaboration

- ❖ Becky met with me about next year's Hazard Branch renovation, and shared the construction grant information and preliminary questions from Creative Library Concepts. I was able to put together a document with photos, shelf counts, and plans for each stage of the project. We had a meeting with Nancy Dalzell from Creative Library Concepts at the end of the month, and discussed the first draft of the plans and furniture options. I'm looking forward to working on this project, and excited to see the end result!

### Southside

- ❖ Christina from **Beauchamp Branch** visited Dunbar and the Boys and Girls Club this month and helped 20 kids make turkeys using geometric shapes. Everyone had the exact same shapes but it was great to see how different their designs were!
- ❖ Pat from **Betts Branch** participated in Literacy Night at the Syracuse Academy of Science elementary school, where she quizzed 77 students, 8 teens, and 55 adults about the oceans and handed out prizes. She also had worksheets that challenged people to identify which animal does not live in the ocean, and had a bucket of paper fish you could fish for with magnetic wands.

### Westside

- ❖ Shauna from **Hazard Branch** has resumed her outreach story times with one of Porter Elementary's pre-k classrooms. This month, children read stories about fall animals and plants and afterwards, they were able to rotate through four different Storytime STEAM Stations.
- ❖ Charlie from **Mundy Branch** visited Fowler on November 14<sup>th</sup> for a Back to School Library Card Drive. He signed up over 100 students for cards in the spring, and this month's drive signed up an additional 22 students. He and Zulay also made their monthly visit to Providence House for regular library services, and Charlie tutored his Book Buddies Jas'xiel and Felix 4 times in November.

### Eastside

- ❖ Carol Johnson and library page Marilyn Zaleon from **Petit Branch** attended the Westcott Leadership Roundtable meeting on November 29. Representatives from twelve community groups shared information about their services and upcoming initiatives. Library staff learned about a new source for neighborhood arts programming grants and well as the significant increase in the number of people coming to the Westcott Community Center's food pantry. Petit will partner with the WCC to collect food pantry items in February. Petit Children's Librarian

Quinn Gardner is working with a Syracuse University iSchool student who is conducting a marketing and assessment plan for Petit's children's nonfiction collection.

- ❖ Margaret from **Soule Branch** did an outreach program at the Eastside Boys & Girls Club of Syracuse. It was a boisterous and fun crowd who enjoyed reading a Thanksgiving book, doing a hand turkey craft, and participating in a hilarious book-related quiz. Soule staff also did some adult outreach, as Sarah O'Neill met with Lisa Chudhuri, Library Director at LeMoyne College, to talk about possible outreach opportunities on campus. Ideas included tabling at the club fair each semester, taking part in the freshman orientation scavenger hunt, and offering exhibition space for students to display their artwork.

### Northside

- ❖ Tamice from **White Branch** does a weekly storytime at the Catholic Charities Pre-K Program at SNCC, as well as starting a new outreach storytime at Our Lady of Pompei Pre-K. Tamice and Sean also tabled at Grant Middle School for ENL Parent Night, met new families and students, and networked with ENL teachers from across SCSD.

## 2024 Service Goals

As we move farther from the pandemic years, OCPL city libraries are prepared to emerge stronger than ever, with a renewed emphasis on shared programs and services across the branches. The theme of the pandemic years was "We're All In This Together" and last year's summer reading theme was "All Together Now". We are excited to keep this momentum going and continue to join hands across the city so that all branches are stronger together. With this in mind, let's embark on 2024 together as OCPL uplifts our communities and helps Syracuse thrive!

These collective goals are designed to be flexible, and to encompass other projects and programs as the year progresses. My main objectives are:

- ❖ *Signage Standards* – Working with the Communications Department to revise our branding guidelines, produce new standards for how many signs should be displayed in different areas, and outline the types of signage and printing services offered by Communications staff.
- ❖ *Shared Programs* – Highlighting programs that happen across the city, including annual Costume Swaps in partnership with OCRRA, and a new Memory Café geared toward seniors and their caregivers.
- ❖ *Collections* – Looking at audiobooks and music CDs to see if we might weed or transform these collections. If we don't have audiobooks anymore, what emerging programs and services can we bring about? Should we replace the shelving with more seating? Should we retain the shelving and use it for different collections?
- ❖ *Statistics* – Putting collective stats in 5 main categories at the top of the report each month, to highlight our impact city-wide. Over the course of the year, we will be able to see how our stats fluctuate or hold steady, what trends we see emerging, and if there are gaps in what we're recording that might reveal new priorities.
- ❖ *Strategic Planning* – Branches and Central staff will be important participants in our upcoming journey to produce a strategic plan for OCPL's future.