

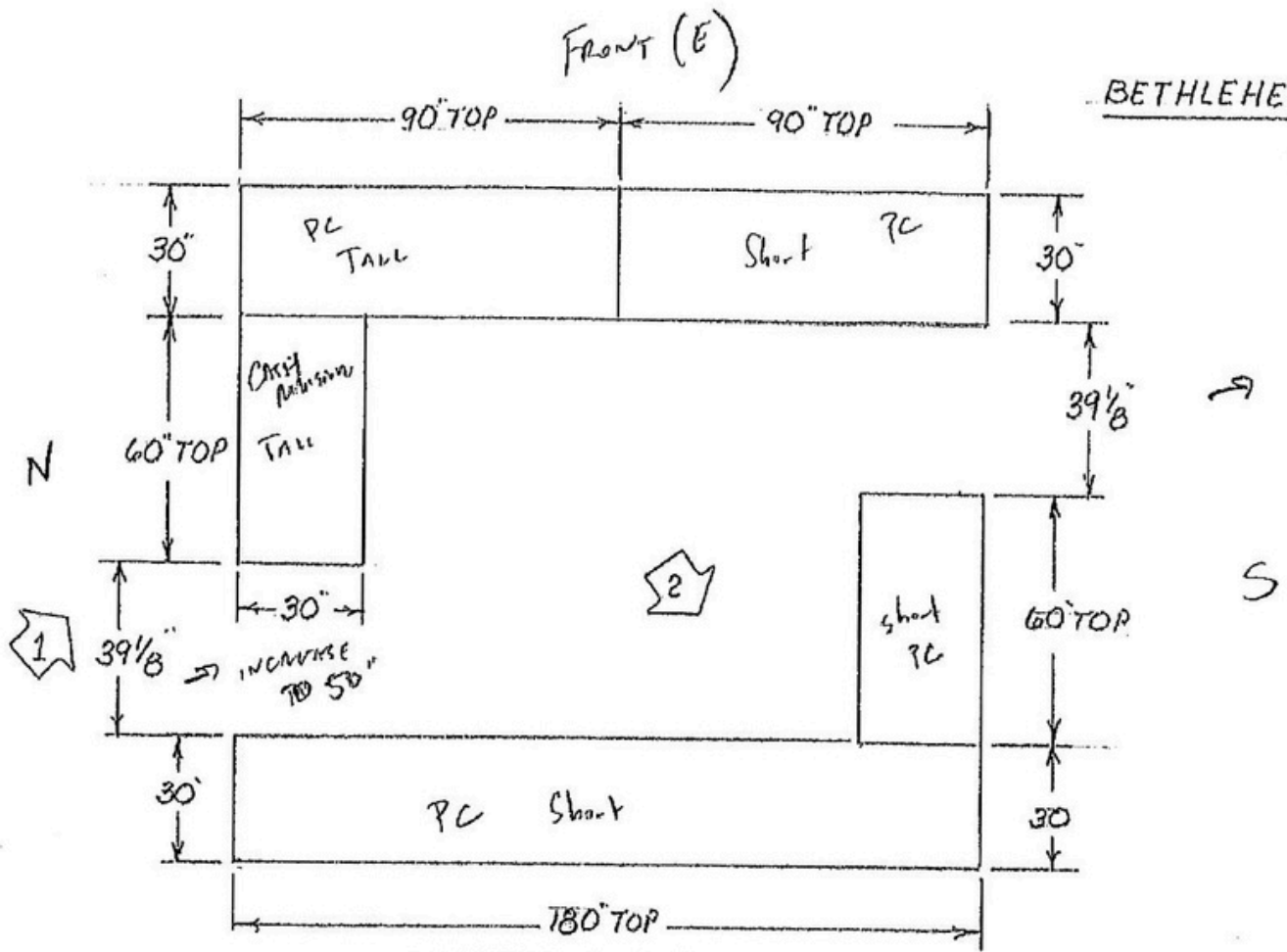


WELCOME  
B A P L

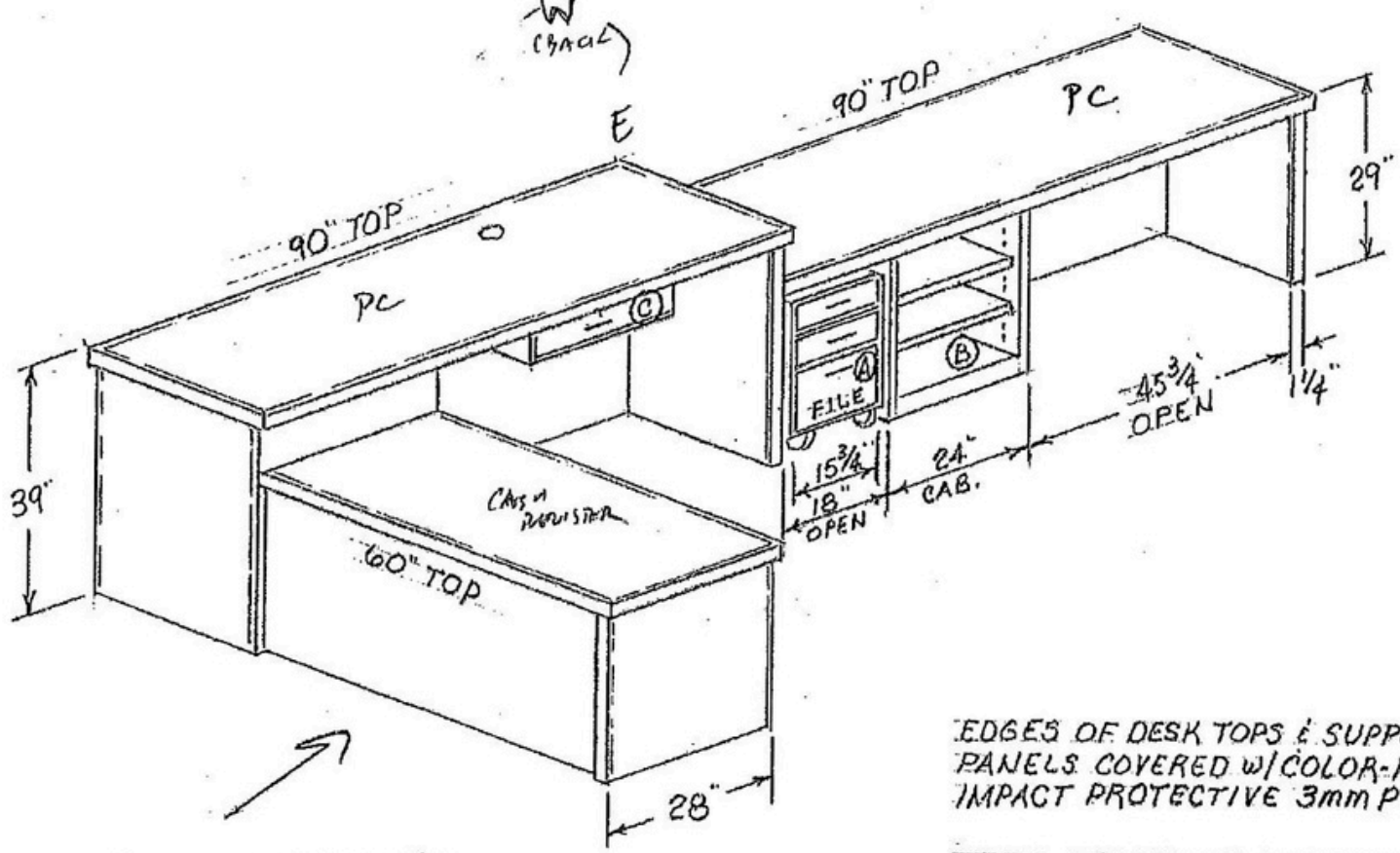
BETHLEHEM  
AREA PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

BETHLEHEM DESK



DESK PLAN



VIEW #1

SWAMP  
MILK TOP

EDGES OF DESK TOPS & SUPPORT  
PANELS COVERED W/COLOR-MAT  
IMPACT PROTECTIVE 3mm PVC  
WIRE GROMMET LOCATION  
PER CUSTOMER REQUEST.



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# A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



I spend more time looking at blueprints than I ever thought I would when I became a librarian. I've learned so much. Did you know they aren't even always blue?! Thankfully I have a great team here at the library of knowledgeable co-workers and we had a wonderful crew of designers, engineers, and library experts to assist us as we transformed the first floor of the Main Library for the first time in decades.

It has been wonderful to hear the many comments from long-time library users, as well as those new to our facility, who appreciate the redesign. It is indeed modern and fresh, while also charming and cozy. We didn't have to get rid of any books (many of you have asked!) and we didn't lose the good views or natural light. We managed to do this by having lower shelves, but more of them, which allowed us to keep the collection the same size while reconfiguring the space. We added additional study areas as well, and we will continue to refine the space to meet the needs of our users.

The redesign of the first floor might have been the biggest (and noisiest) project in 2023, but it was by no means the only thing that occurred at BAPL this past year. Across all library locations, we kept busy and had many interesting and educational experiences for our users, in addition to loaning out lots and lots of books. I am sure new and interesting challenges and opportunities will arise and I look forward to this next chapter at the library.

A final note: We celebrated the retirement of Branch Manager Brenda Grow this year. Brenda has been a fixture at BAPL for decades, specifically at our South Side Branch. Her love of library work—and even more so for the community she served—was unmatched. There will never be another Brenda Grow, and she will be deeply missed.



# LIBRARY BOARD

We extend our gratitude to the individuals who dedicated their time and expertise to the Library Board in 2023. These trustees, who are appointed by City Council and the governing bodies of each of our supporting municipalities, volunteer their time, leadership, and commitment to provide direction and support to the library. Board members work in collaboration with library staff, community members, and stakeholders to ensure the library fulfills its mission. In addition to their regular board meetings, these trustees also participate in various committees and community events to advance the mission of the library.

## CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Anne Felker  
Joanne Garcia  
Jane Gill  
Joyce Hinnefeld  
Christopher Hunt  
Rachel Leon  
Delia Marrero

## BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP

Randi Blauth

## FOUNTAIN HILL

Will Rufe

## HANOVER TOWNSHIP

Telly Diacogiannis





# FIRST FLOOR RENOVATION

The first floor of our Main Library was completely transformed this year, and in just a few months time. It was a major endeavor! We first carefully packed up over 100,000 books and other library materials to ensure their safekeeping while we removed the shelves and decades-old carpet. Once the new carpet was on the floor and a fresh coat of paint was on the walls, the new shelving and furniture was delivered. Rows of beautiful new shelves were laid out and assembled, making space for the books to happily return to their homes.

New huddle rooms were built for small group study, telecommuting, and other uses. A new reference desk found its place at the center of the building and the new space began to take shape. While these renovations were underway, the front desk of the library remained open for patrons to borrow from a small selection of books, as well as to place reserves. Other branches of BAPL were extra busy this time, as access to the Main Library was limited. We celebrated the re-opening of the library with an open house on April 29. A large and enthusiastic crowd cheered the new space.

The success of this renovation project would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the library staff, who went above and beyond their regular duties every day and put boundless energy into every phase of the renovation. The project also owes no small thanks to the many businesses, foundations, and community members who gave generous donations to fund the project. We thank you! The new BAPL is a vibrant and welcoming environment that we know will continue to evolve to meet the needs of our community. If you have not had the chance to see the transformed space, we invite you to visit today and explore all that it has to offer!





# BAPL COOLIDGE

Although small, our beloved Coolidge Branch of BAPL in Bethlehem Township is very active. Throughout 2023, as always, our relationship with our patrons remained our top priority as we continuously worked to better our library for you. This little community library serves as more than a convenient pick-up and drop-off location for your favorite books. It has become a hub for neighborhood events and community gatherings of all kinds.

By far one of the most exciting events of the year was a visit from Equi-librium, an equine therapy center right here in the Lehigh Valley! We loved having a special “*neigh-bor*” stop by, a mini therapy horse named Pippa. Equi-librium Program Director Christina Coxe provided two 45-minute sessions with Pippa to over 50 visitors. Library patrons of all ages had the chance to feed and brush the horse while Christina explained how the therapy sessions worked. Guests were able to learn about the healing work of therapeutic horsemanship and discover how the connections between horses and humans enables hope, independence, and life-changing outcomes. Equi-librium provides this unique therapeutic approach to individuals with physical and developmental disabilities, as well as those with social and emotional needs. The program was part of Remake Learning Days of Northeastern, PA.

Coolidge also hosted a variety of other events throughout the year, including guest speakers, writing groups, storytimes, read-to-the-dogs events, and much more. Guest speaker Karla Koehl from AARP gave a timely and popular presentation on decluttering and downsizing. A crowd of about 20 was packed tightly into our small library, and we closed out the event with some wonderful discussion. Chess instructor Chris Giannaras hosted weekly chess classes in the Summer of 2023, which generated many returning patrons and families. Local author, memoir coach, and therapist Jerry Waxler, hosted a monthly Memoir Writing Group via Zoom, which continues to generate attendance. Our yearly animal show with Eyes of the Wild was held outside at Comer Park (right next door to Coolidge). Patrons came prepared with chairs and blankets, and enjoyed the chance to met special guests such as a wallaby, skunk, snake, and hedgehog.

We continued to remain flexible as some of our hallway space was eliminated, and we are always faced with the challenge of stocking the most popular books for kids and adults alike—but that’s all part of working in a community with many avid readers! With 2024 approaching, Coolidge is looking forward to continuing to grow our branch and make it a comfortable place for lots of events and gatherings.



# BOOKS ON THE HILL

Books on the Hill, our one-of-a-kind retired bookmobile in Fountain Hill, is technically the smallest branch of BAPL, but dedicated Books on the Hill staff member Cleveland Wall prefers to call it “a mighty twig” rather than a small branch. This mini-library defies expectations by offering an extensive collection across various genres, appealing to readers of all ages. Far from being limited to children’s books despite its colorful kid-friendly exterior, the library boasts a remarkable depth and breadth that surprises visitors. The conversion of an old bookmobile into a stationary mini-library is a creative re-use of an old vehicle that establishes a satellite location for the Fountain Hill community. The charm of Books on the Hill is not lost on anyone, as its adorable presence is admired by all.

Books on the Hill is under the dedicated stewardship of BAPL’s Cleveland Wall, a poet with a passion for literature. She highlights a diverse selection of books and hosts weekly “Poetry Tuesday” events, providing a unique and enriching experience for the community. Whether attending in person or tuning in via YouTube, readers have the opportunity to enjoy her readings and learn about a wide variety of poets. Many residents visited Books on the Hill during the summer, whether to pick up a book, attend a storytime, or to participate in the Summer Reading Program in 2023. The summer program encourages students to keep reading during the break from school, and adds to the sense of community and collaboration. The success of Books on the Hill embodies our commitment to promoting literacy and fostering a love for books for the residents of Fountain Hill and beyond.





# BOOKMOBILE

Our beloved BAPL bookmobile saw another year of success in serving residents all over our service area. Driver Mike makes stops in the City of Bethlehem as well as Hanover and Bethlehem Townships, Fountain Hill, and at special events throughout the Lehigh Valley. Busy stops include Country Meadows on Green Pond Road, East Hills Middle School, Weis Markets on Crawford Drive, both Township Community Centers, Bayard Park, and many more. The Westgate Mall, one of the bookmobile's oldest and most well-established locations, has offered up some challenges in 2023 due to the construction and lack of parking due to the ongoing renovations there. But regular visitors to that spot need not worry; we are not giving up on the stop at the Mall. It is practically an institution unto itself on Thursdays!

A highlight of the library's calendar every year comes in the summer months. As always, some of our younger patrons signed up and logged hours for the Summer Reading Events consistently when the bookmobile visited their neighborhood. The Summer Reading Program rewards their time spent reading with prize drawings for all sorts of fun rewards. The bookmobile also had a big role in this year's Trunk-or-Treat event at Payrow Plaza. Candy, books, and other fun stuff was handed out to the many kids in attendance at this great event.

Fans of the bookmobile were happy to see a collectible replica for sale this year. Local artist Ben Roysdon made a mini-bookmobile for kids and library users of all ages to play with or put on their bookshelf. It even has a sticker of Mike that you can put in the window.

Check the library's website at [bapl.org/bookmobile](http://bapl.org/bookmobile) to see when the area's biggest collection of books on wheels will be coming to a neighborhood near you.





# Asa Packer Elementary School

## OUTREACH

Outreach is an essential part of library service to and one of the most important and effective ways that BAPL can share our message with our community. Outreach events are led by a number of library departments and involve both going off-site to visit community partners and events, as well as reaching out to community groups to invite them in for tours and special programs in the library. Several departments held trainings for Bethlehem Area School District librarians and teachers on BAPL resources on February 17th. The Lehigh University Club Expo was held on August 28th where library staff met new and returning students. Between September and November, computer literacy workshops were held at Kirkland Village and Moravian Village. Library staff at these workshops taught computer basics and cybersecurity for residents of those facilities. On October 7th, the bookmobile took a trip to the Memorial Library of Nazareth for Touch-a-Truck, which is an incredibly successful annual event.

In Youth Services, we have not only been able to successfully connect with the community, but also our local schools. BAPL staff attended a Spring Carnival and Community Day at Thomas Jefferson and Lincoln Elementary Schools, as well as Back-to-School events at Spring Garden Elementary, William Penn Elementary, and Northeast Middle Schools. Staff was also able to attend Read Across America events and an Executive Education Academy at William Penn Elementary. We staffed a table at Freedom High School for their High School Career Fair to provide information on careers in libraries and volunteer opportunities at BAPL. We presented four STEAM programs at Lincoln Elementary daycare and six literature-based STEAM events at Northeast Community Summer Camp between June and July. Youth Services brought a multitude of storytimes for families to the community pools over the summer. Youth Services Librarian Julia Brennan worked with Historic Bethlehem to provide story sessions at the Kemerer Museum, and she also held a storytime at Musikfest in the Colonial Quarter. Staff members attended the Mural Dedication and Movie Night at Yosko Park, Apple Days at Burnside Plantation, Bethlehem's Blueberry Festival, Lehigh Valley Pride, and much more.

Our South Side Branch was also able to connect with the community and schools in the area. Staff attended Donegan Elementary's "Dr. Suess Day" in March as well as their Kindergarten registration in May. Staff also visited Fountain Hill's Kindergarten registration in May and hosted an after-school event at Broughal Middle School in September. Adult Services staff at South Side held four book club meetings at Cedarbrook Senior Care and Rehabilitation in January, April, June, and July. Christine and Regina visited the YMCA Adult Daycare Center to do chair yoga, read a story, play a word game, and create a Valentine's Day tote bag craft in February. The attendees were kind, engaged, and always appreciative of anything BAPL does.

We look forward to visiting more places and making new connections in 2024, so keep an eye out for us out and about!



# REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This year proved to be one of the busiest and best for our Reference Department. In 2023, Reference hosted over 200 events, both in person and online. In January we welcomed Wendy Littner Thomson to host four sessions of grief workshops, which saw full attendance. The month of May brought a new and exciting program to the community: a Monday Open Mic. This was hosted by renowned open mic host Bill Medei and organized by Information Technician Matt Wolf. The events have been regularly attended and made our library the place to be on Monday evenings! Our Adult Summer Reading Challenge was a success between June and August thanks to the participation of the community and the hard work of our Reference staff. Although we worked through the challenges of a new library layout, we ended up seeing a participation increase of 21% compared to 2022 (with 258 entries). The program also included “Make a Paper Quilt” during the second week in July. Over 50 patrons and staff participated, and these quilt squares were proudly displayed in the front window of the Main Library during the month of August. October brought on a number of spooky events, including paranormal investigations, a talk on serial killers, and horror movie trivia. November included “Voces de la Comunidad: Latino Reflections of Life in Bethlehem” and “Gathering of Nations - Celebrate & Learn about Native American Culture.” These represent just a small slice of the many fantastic event offerings for adults in 2023!

Many Reference staff members pitched in this year to help aid the Main Library’s renovation process, including working with contractors, shifting item locations, installing new shelves, organizing the new reference desk, and ordering new furniture and supplies. On April 29th, an open house served as the reopening of the first floor where we welcomed the community to see the new library. We were able to fully reopen the library to the public on May 1st, ushering in a new era of library service for the Main library. Our Reference Department got an upgrade that included two huddle rooms for collaborative or remote work (which see an average of over 75 users per month), multiple smaller tables for individual work, an up-to-date computer center, and a four-sided Reference Desk, perfectly situated to serve patrons. We consolidated many of the collections to better fit into a 21st Century framework, including a new graphic novel section, a re-organized DVD section, many new display areas, and a better flow of each collection to ensure patron accessibility. The 2023 renovations at Main proved to be an overwhelming success, with overall library usage up and a sharp increase in reference questions!

In 2023, Reference staff attended a wide variety of webinars and trainings, as well as an in-house training in Youth Services. We produced two new brochures on House Research and Interlibrary Loan service, trained BASD teachers on BAPL local history resources, welcomed an Archives Intern and two new Bethlehem Room volunteers, updated internal policies and manuals, and worked heavily with the Museum Library Alliance of the Greater Lehigh Valley (MLA).

Lastly, our Reference Department is not just a place to put books on hold and get reference questions answered—we wear many different hats! We also provide computer and technology assistance, offer a wide range of e-Resources and online databases, maintain the periodical collections, host a large variety of programs and events for adults, deliver Interlibrary Loan service for the entire district, run the Bookmobile, manage Studio II reservations, contribute to marketing materials and social media, attend outreach events in the community, and manage a large archive of historical items from all over the Lehigh Valley, and beyond.



# SOUTH SIDE BRANCH

Throughout 2023, our South Side Branch hosted a wide variety of successful and engaging projects and events that benefited our community. One particularly exciting new partnership with our local YMCA allowed us to feed many individuals in our community. This free dinner program not only provided food, but also fostered a sense of camaraderie among those who attended. The dinners were prepared by the YMCA and delivered to the Branch by a volunteer. Patrons were able to eat meals in one of our spaces downstairs (decorated as "The South Side Cafe") or, if they were unable to stay, take a bagged meal to go. Meals ranged from chicken sandwiches (a favorite) to walking tacos to PB&J, and they always came with a side of vegetables and a fruit cup as well. This program was a wonderful way to get to know our patrons better, and to feed those experiencing food insecurity. The environment was truly something special; a lot of laughs were had, and we occasionally broke out some board games to play as well. Over the course of the year, we were able to feed roughly 570 individuals.

The Branch was also able to host a summer meals program for children during the summer months. The end of the Summer Reading Program included a "Kindness Carnival" with games, face-painting, art, and prizes. Staff and patrons alike came out and participated with their families. We were also able to welcome Alicia Vincelette of Inked Edge Paper Art to host a card-making class at the Branch. Alicia has a regular following, and this program brought many new faces to the Branch who have since returned for a variety of our other programs.

Ongoing book sales at the Branch have been popular as has the addition of permanent children's stations. These include our "Anytime Storytime" table (a collection of hand-selected books paired with a craft and songs/fingerplays) and a STEM station (maker kits, magna tile challenges) for our patrons to enjoy anytime.

We are very proud to say that we introduced our new World Language Collection to the library. This collection features books in languages other than English and Spanish for all ages, and patrons have already begun taking advantage of the material. Our staff has also been hard at work organizing the adult fiction section by genre. Once finished, patrons will be able to browse and find what they are looking for much more easily. The children's section was adorned with dozens of handmade decorations from talented staff member Nayeli Hance. The Branch is looking better than it ever has before! Towards the last few months of the year, we have been able to stock the public restroom with free menstrual products for patrons. This program has been well received and donations are always welcome to help us keep it running.

Our Branch is always looking for new ways to encourage more community members to visit us. In September, we hosted a promotional event for Library Card Sign-up Month in which anyone who renewed/applied for a library card at the Branch was entered into a raffle to win a Kindle! We were also able to establish a pop-up library cart at the Hispanic Center Lehigh Valley with donated Spanish books to help promote our Spanish sections. All in all, we are continuously striving to form community partnerships to reach as many people as possible!

Lastly, this year brought lots of staff changes to the Branch as we said goodbye to our Branch Manager, Brenda Grow. After more than 25 years of hard work at the branch and over 40 with BAPL, Brenda retired in September. We welcomed many new individuals into the branch in the second half of 2023, including Alison Madden as the Branch Manager.





# YOUTH SERVICES

As always, our Youth Services Department had a busy year in 2023. We gladly welcomed back families who were able to reconnect post-pandemic, and were also thrilled to see many new families who were visiting for the first time. Our department continued to work closely with the Bethlehem Area School District for events, both in-house at the Main library and on-site at a variety of school locations. Moravian University remained an important partner of the department, providing tutors for our Homework Help sessions through their America Reads program. Also, Moravian's Modern Language Department presented monthly World Stories sessions, featuring art projects as well as a picture book read in both English and a different language each session.

The City of Bethlehem proved to be an excellent partner, working with us in a variety of ways including lending police officers for the ever popular story sessions hosted by members of the Bethlehem Police Department. The Mounted Police trotted in for a special event that was a huge success. Young library patrons loved seeing and interacting with the horses outside the library. The Bethlehem Health Bureau lent experts to our parent-child Family Place Play Workshops to answer questions and provide insight into healthy lifestyles for families. We partnered with 4H to host events that taught the basics of engineering, animal science, environmental science, and kitchen science to kids. Staff members presented events for the school-aged and teen audiences that offered skill-building in sewing, painting, and design with elements like Perler Beads. All in all, this year was extremely successful for Youth Services' events, but the most popular and successful turned out to be Trunk-or-Treat and our library lizard, Spike's, 7th Birthday Party!

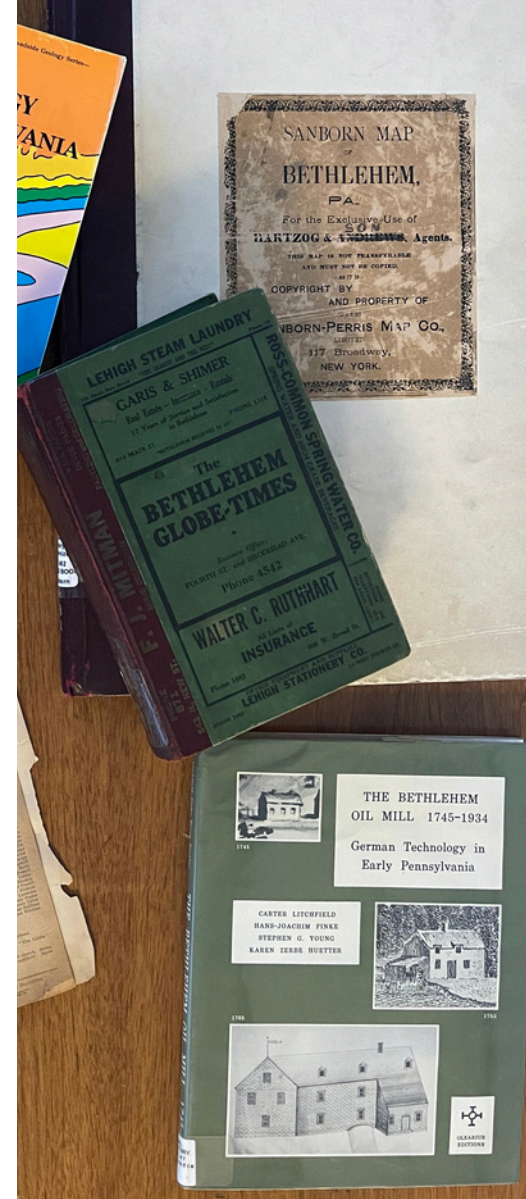
We saw an increase in participation for the summer program, as many children and teens signed up to read, learn, and have fun at the library during summer break. The teen audience was specifically drawn to the department through our Dungeons and Dragons sessions. The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) continued to grow as we worked to reach our mission of giving opportunities to teens to earn community service hours for assisting with events.

We expanded our play area with a new puppet stage and play kitchen and added new items, including a great selection of "talking books" with audio inside so that you can listen and read along. Also check out our "Outpacks" -- themed backpacks that encourage families to get outside and explore waterways, Historic Bethlehem, the night sky, and more. And finally, make sure to stop by to see Spike and say hello to him in his donated new home!



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Bethlehem Area Public Library would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our municipal governments for funding our operation. Without this funding, we would not be able to provide our community with the educational and recreational resources that have come to be expected. We are proud to be able to offer our patrons access to an ever-growing selection of books, magazines, and other materials, as well as a variety of programs and events to promote learning and literacy. We are deeply grateful for the support of our municipal governments, and for their ongoing commitment to the betterment of the community we share.



**Total Income: \$2,953,491**

**City of Bethlehem: \$1,431,503**

**State of Pennsylvania: \$459,764**

**Bethlehem Township: \$488,648**

**Fountain Hill: \$91,276**

**Hanover Township: \$222,581**

**Investment Interest: \$102,818**

**Overdue fines: \$36,758**

**Book Sales: \$50,505**

**Annual Appeal: \$31,507**

**Total Expenses: \$2,923,570**

**Salaries/Wages: \$1,878,842**

**Benefits: \$305,348**

**Library Materials: \$242,388**

**Utilities: \$118,037**

**IT: \$83,913**

**Insurance: \$42,695**

**Financial Services: \$31,397**

**Building Supplies: \$15,353**

**Bibliographic System: \$39,489**

**HR: \$21,135**

*These numbers are published prior to audit.*



# MAJOR DONORS

We express our gratitude to the many generous donors whose support played such a pivotal role in the successful renovation of our library this year. The impact of their contributions is evident not only in the revitalized physical space but also in the diverse programs, services, and expanded collections that BAPL offers throughout the year (and every year). The support for learning and reading from our community is truly remarkable. We extend our sincere thanks to all who express their support for our mission and our commitment to the community's cultural and educational well-being. Below are the major donors for 2023.

Albarell Electric Inc.  
American Fence and Flag  
Backstage Library Works Inc.  
Janice R. Brody  
Carol Ann Budick  
Dan and Sara Capwell  
Olga and John Conneen  
Robert and Mary Cowling  
Jean and Donald Davis  
Barbara H. Diamond  
Domaci  
Millicent Drake  
Edge Restaurant  
Fidelity Bank  
FRED Fund  
Jane Frounfelker & John J. Kish IV  
Joan Glover  
Muriel Greenblatt  
Patrick and April Herrity  
Lori and Eric Herz  
Steven Kraft & Margot Hillman  
Kristin Illick & Jeffrey Frank  
Anthony Italiani Jr.  
Richard Johnson  
Zoe Karipides  
Renée N. King  
King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul  
Elinor Knechel  
Diane LaBelle  
Lehigh Valley International Airport

Patricia Lyons  
Noralee B. Manzek  
Genevieve Marcon  
Sarah McIntosh  
Mary Jo and Russell Miserendino  
Lisa Moriarty  
Barry Pell  
Philadelphia Trust Company  
Alison and Paul Pierpoint  
Julie Piñeiro  
Deborah E. Prince  
Mary Jo and Ron Reed  
The Reidler Foundation  
Barbara Reimers  
Tom Repasch  
Linda and Don Robertson  
Barbara Roper  
Leni Rufe  
Will Rufe  
Robert L. Sandt  
Rex and Michele Schultz  
Nuriman Sheets  
Bill and Mimi Stanford  
Jean Theman  
Lucy and Steven Thompson  
Robert and Ruth Walden  
Mark Webster  
Linda L. Weiss  
Working Dog Press  
Ron and Sharon Yoshida



# PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

## Total events and attendance

Total events for kids (Main + SS + Outreach) = 633

Attendance at these programs (Main + SS + Outreach) = 9,573

Total events for adults (Main + SS + Coolidge) = 460

Attendance at these programs (Main + SS + Coolidge) = 4,884

## Event Highlights

America Through the Lens of Black Filmmakers

Lehigh Valley Book Festival

Spike's Birthday Party

11FEST

Author Talk with Katherine Ramsland

Weekly Yoga and Qigong classes

Sign Language Storytime

“A Steelworker’s Life”

Voces de la Comunidad: Latino Reflections of Life in Bethlehem

Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*



# YOUTH SERVICES EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

**In 2023, the Main Library Youth Services Department presented:**

- 424 onsite programs to 10,456 children, teens, and families
- Outreach to schools, community events, parks, and on our Bookmobile allowed us to offer 37 events for more than 1,700 participants.
- Participation in our Summer Reading & Learning program for preschool through high school reached more than 1,100 young people.
- The biggest event of 2023 was the Trunk-or-Treat held in the evening on the Payrow Plaza. Youth Librarian Julia Brennan partnered with the various City of Bethlehem departments and with community organizations to present a Halloween event to top all Halloween events. Approximately 900 adults, teens, and children attended this event where participants came in costume to collect treats, make crafts, visit a firetruck and the Bookmobile, sit in a police car or rescue vehicle, play games, and learn about local organizations and the services that they offer.







## LEHIGH VALLEY BOOK FESTIVAL

The 2023 Lehigh Valley Book Festival was the biggest and best one yet! The first night featured a swanky soirée at “The End” bookstore in Allentown with special guest Maria Rodale, the organic farming advocate and author of *Love Nature Magic*. Saturday March 25th featured a full day of activities at the Main Library of BAPL. Acclaimed songwriter-turned-novelist Rupert Holmes discussed his new title *How to Murder Your Employer* and signed books as well as his iconic record “Escape (The Piña Colada Song).” WLVR’s Christine Dempsey hosted a lively interview with Mr. Holmes that both was enlightening and hilarious. In the afternoon there was an impressive slate of authors and illustrators, including a moving discussion of mindfulness with Shonda Moralis.

As the weekend wound down, we hosted a jazz brunch at SteelStackson Sunday morning. Author Aiden Levy was there with his new book *Saxophone Colossus: The Life and Music of Sonny Rollins* and live music was beautifully performed by the Emma Bockrath Trio. Following the jazz brunch, the literary enthusiasts in attendance enjoyed a screening of *Hello, Bookstore* at the Frank Banko Alehouse Cinema.

The festival was organized by our partners from Let's Play Books and funded in part with funding received through the County of Northampton’s Hotel Tax Program.





## PENNSYLVANIA SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL



On the fourteenth of June, the Bethlehem Area Public Library hosted a jolly performance by the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, bringing the whimsical charms of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to life. This enchanting event unfolded as a splendid act within the library's summer reading program, uniting the written word with the theatrical arts in true Shakespearean fashion.

The Main Library transformed into a lively stage for this literary masquerade. Scores of bibliophiles flocked hither to witness the spectacle, proving that the magic of the Bard still holds sway over hearts and minds. The fairy king Oberon, his mischievous servant Puck, and the Queen of the Fairies, Titania lit up the stage. "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" echoed in the air, reminding the audience of the delightful folly that often accompanies the affairs of the heart.

The performers were stellar, turning the Cohen Room at the Main Library into a top-notch Shakespearean stage where literature and performance frolicked in joyous harmony. The union of literature and performance were a match made not in the stars, but in the pages of Shakespearean wit and whimsy. Huzzah for this splendid convergence of quills and quips!







# OPEN MIC

New for 2023, the Open Mic Night held every Monday at the Main Library of BAPL has proven to be a resounding success. The weekly event showcases local performers for enthusiastic audiences. Each week you can see something different -- the free event attracts a diverse range of musicians, rappers, poets, comedians, and more. The library's welcoming atmosphere, combined with the opportunity for individuals to showcase their artistic endeavors, has fostered a sense of community and camaraderie that extends beyond the stage.

The host of the Open Mic is Bill Medei of Bethlehem, who has been running such events in the Lehigh Valley for many years and has built up a loyal following from generations of performers. Whether a seasoned pro or newcomer to the stage, all enjoy his warm demeanor and cheerful approach.

BAPL is proud to be a place that encourages artistic exploration and offers a space for artistic exchange that enriches the lives of both participants and attendees. Performers have included accomplished players who have been taking the stage for decades and also young singers just starting out.

We are happy to open our doors to all people and communities. With the popularity of Studio at 11 at BAPL, we are growing our role as a hub and platform for musical and artistic people of all types in our community. No longer just a place to read and research, BAPL takes its job of being a multi-faceted community resource seriously. For us, that means excitedly pivoting and evolving our offerings for our community. We are proud to provide a venue for the incredibly talented and creative performing artists in our community. In addition to the open mic, don't forget about Studio 11, where performers can make an album for free in the basement of the library.



# APPLE FEST

This year we held the first BAPL AppleFest, a tasty partnership among community-minded businesses and organizations, all coming together to celebrate and support one another. The highlight of the event was an apple-tasting where guests tasted over a dozen bite-size samples of a variety of apples, as well as sips of locally-pressed cider. There were activities for all ages, including a children's corner with apple-themed games and harvest-themed library books available for check-out. Jake Scholl and his sons, Oliver and Leo, made an appearance, allowing kids to "meet the farmer."

Back Door Bakeshop offered cookies, apple cider donuts, and pumpkin rolls for purchase. The Bethlehem Food Co-Op provided children's activities including an "exploding apple" science demonstration. Delicious and exciting!

The seed for the event was planted a few years ago, when Scholl Orchards held an apple tasting at their fruit stand. Martha Scholl, the market manager, and Joyce Hinnefeld, a part-time staff member at the market and a member of the BAPL Library Board, began talking about an apple-tasting event at the library. It ended up being a great opportunity to celebrate both the 75th anniversary of Scholl Orchards and the library's newly renovated first floor. Planning took shape for a Bethlehem-based harvest festival weekend, celebrating all kinds of local, homegrown Lehigh Valley specialties—from apples, ciders, and donuts to music, along with our fantastic library.





# 11FEST

We celebrated the fifth annual 11FEST at BAPL this year. The concert is held every November 11th (11/11) and there are eleven bands. Fans pay eleven dollars to get in and the proceeds benefit Studio 11. You could say we really embrace the theme of turning it up to eleven! Lehigh Valley hard rockers Bellwether Ritual closed out the concert this year, bringing huge rock energy that shook the shelves. What could be more fun than rocking out and getting loud in the library?

This year's line-up also included: Emma Bockrath, Jillian Dolan, Ben Lovell, Rhyming on the Beat, Erik Santana, Mari Lwyd, Fictional Name, Zel, Zoinks!, and Time Being. Zoinks! is a band made up of young people from Lehigh Valley Girls Rock—one of the 11FEST event partners this year and every year. Rapper "Rhyming on the Beat" featured a wholly improvised rap song using suggestions from the audience—it was an amazing performance!

We also had vendors selling shirts, mugs, zines, and other fun stuff. Over \$1,000 was raised in support of the studio, allowing us to maintain the equipment, repair and replace damaged items, and keep this free music-making space rocking for another year. Maybe next year we'll turn it up to twelve! (Settle down, Berk.)

We loved getting together with such an eclectic group of musicians and supporters of the arts. 11FEST was a great opportunity to discover some great acts and gain some fans. We enjoyed our tour of the library and Studio 11 so much that we have already booked some time in the studio for our next writing session. Our favorite thing about the event was the support of everyone involved, from the bands, to the organizers, to the audience. 11FEST is a testament to the fact that the BAPL and staff are an essential part of nurturing the local arts scene!

-- **Mari Lwyd** (Mike, Chris, Ian, and Scott)



# USAGE AND STATISTICS

## New Library Cardholders in 2023

City of Bethlehem 2,037

Bethlehem Township 527

Fountain Hill 123

Hanover Township 217

- Visitors to the Main Library: 150,857
- Visitors to the South Side Branch: 26,288
- Main Library check-outs: 311,008
- South Side Branch check-outs: 16,235
- Bookmobile check-outs: 7,291
- Coolidge check-outs: 17,662
- e-book downloads: 49,733
- Internet hotspots borrowed: 693
- Bikes borrowed: 87
- Kanopy films streamed: 9,646
- Articles accessed through library databases: 62,251
- Sessions on public computers (Wi-Fi and library PCs): 61,853
- Reference questions answered at the Main Library: 20,270



**Total Items Borrowed: 423,862**



## OUR COLLECTION

Books	160,819
DVDs	19,869
Audiobooks	6,814
Media	8,517

*(records+games+microfilm+CDs)*





FROM: MAY 13, 1909  
TO: JULY 21, 1909

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll #196  
Feb. 1, 1912 - March 30, 1912

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll #212  
Sept. 2, 1914 - Oct. 31, 1914

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll #181  
July 22, 1909 - Sept. 25, 1909

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll #197  
April 1, 1912 - May 23, 1912

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
Roll No. 213  
FROM: Nov. 2, 1914  
TO: Dec. 31, 1914

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
Roll No. 182  
FROM: Sept. 27, 1909  
TO: Nov. 27, 1909

The Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll No. 198  
From: May 24, 1912  
To: July 24, 1912

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll No. 214  
To Jan. 1, 1915  
From Jan. 23, 1915

Bethlehem Globe Times  
Roll No. 183  
From: Nov. 29, 1909  
To: Jan. 27, 1910

THE BETHLEHEM - GLOBE TIMES  
ROLL NO. 199  
FROM: July 25, 1912  
TO: Sept. 20, 1912

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll No. 215  
FROM: JANUARY 25, 1915  
TO: MARCH 22, 1915

The Bethlehem Globe Times  
Roll No. 184  
From: Jan. 28, 1910  
To: Apr. 1, 1910

THE BETHLEHEM Globe-Times  
ROLL NO. 200  
FROM: Sept. 21, 1912  
TO: Nov. 19, 1912

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
ROLL #216  
MARCH 23, 1915 - MAY 17, 1915

BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 185  
FROM: APRIL 2, 1910  
TO: MAY 31, 1910

BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 201  
FROM: NOVEMBER 20, 1912  
TO: JANUARY 18, 1913

BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 217  
FROM: MAY 18, 1915  
TO: JULY 14, 1915

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 186  
FROM June 1, 1910  
TO July 30, 1910

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 203  
From: Mar. 19, 1913  
To: May 15, 1913

BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 218  
FROM: JULY 15, 1915  
TO: SEPTEMBER 15, 1915

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 187  
FROM: Aug. 1, 1910  
TO: Sept. 30, 1910

The Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll No. 204  
From: May 16, 1913  
To: July 14, 1913

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL No. 219  
FROM: Sept. 16, 1915  
TO: Nov. 11, 1915

BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES  
ROLL NO. 188  
FROM: OCTOBER 3, 1910  
TO: DECEMBER 2, 1910

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll 205  
July 15, 1913 - Sept. 12, 1913

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll No. 220  
From Nov. 12, 1915  
To Jan. 12, 1916

The Bethlehem Globe Times  
Roll No. 189  
From: Dec. 3, 1910  
To: Jan. 31, 1911

Bethlehem Globe-Times  
Roll No. 221  
From Jan. 13, 1916  
To Mar. 8, 1916

THE BETHLEHEM GLOBE-TIMES