



**Rochester
Public Library**

More Than You Think

115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

**Rochester Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Kusler-Cox Auditorium, Rundel Memorial Library Building
January 29, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Agenda**

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Benjamin

II. ACTION ITEMS

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| 2. Minutes of December Meeting | Benjamin | page 7 |
| 3. Personnel Changes | Suro | page 9 |
| 4. Financial Reports | Hasselwander | page 11 |
| 5. Monroe Branch Additional Hours Request | Uttaro | page 15 |
| 6. Lyell Branch Hours Update | Uttaro & Clasper | page 15 |
| 7. Tummonds Report | Uttaro | page 16 & 47 |
| 8. Agreement, Children's Division Pathology Services | Hasselwander | page 16 |
| 9. Agreement Amendment, RIT for Rochester History Journal | Hasselwander &
Clasper | page 17 |

III. REPORT/DISCUSSION ITEMS

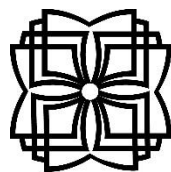
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| 1. Liaison & Committee Reports | | |
| a. Liaison from the MCLS Board | Stockman | |
| b. Liaison from the FFRPL | Borgus | page 49 |
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| a. Director's Report/Community Libraries | Uttaro | page 17 & 32 |
| b. Central Library | Clasper | page 19 |

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

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| 1. Trustee Survey Results & Committee Appointments | Benjamin |
| 2. Defunding the South Dakota State Library | Benjamin |

V. ADJOURNMENT

**Next Meeting:
February 26 , 2025
Joint Meeting with Monroe County Library System Board
Central Library, Rundel Memorial Building**



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**Meeting of the RPL Board of Trustees
Central Library, Rundel Memorial Building
November 27, 2024
Minutes**

RPL Trustees Present: Katherine Baynes, Donna Benjamin, Ellen Brenner, Alinda Drury, Glenn Gardner, Daniel Karin, James Kraus, Sharon Salluzzo, Suzanne Stockman, Jeffrey Tucker (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused:

Staff and Guests: City Law Department Liaison, Allison Bartlett; City Council Liaison, Mitch Gruber; FFRPL Liaison, Donna Borgus; staff members, Debi Mansour, Jennifer Smathers, Ana Suro, Patty Uttaro

Call to Order

Ms. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comments

No members of the public were present who wished to address the board.

Introductions

Ms. Benjamin welcomed Sarah Murphy Abbamonte and Elizabeth Call as incoming trustees. Each briefly introduced themselves.

Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the October 30 meeting were approved as presented.

Personnel Changes

Ms. Suro called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for October 14, 2024–November 8, 2024, and offered to answer questions. Ms. Brenner MADE A MOTION to approve the personnel changes. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Reports

On behalf of Ms. Hasselwander, Ms. Uttaro reviewed the financial reports with the trustees and offered to answer questions. Ms. Salluzzo MADE A MOTION to approve the monthly financial reports as presented and approved by the RPL Finance Committee. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Appointment and Reappointment of Trustees

Ms. Benjamin presented the recommendations of the Nominating Committee to appoint Sarah Murphy Abbamonte to the partial term left vacant by Dr. Karen Soanes and recommend to City Council the

reappointment of Jeffrey Tucker and the appointment of Elizabeth Call. Mr. Kraus MADE A MOTION to approve the forwarding of Dr. Tucker's and Ms. Call's' names to the mayor for recommendation to the City Council for reappointment and appointment, respectively, to the RPL Board of Trustees for full 5-year terms from January 1, 2025–December 31, 2029; and appoint Sarah Murphy Abbamonte to the vacant term ending December 31, 2028. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Election of Officers

Ms. Benjamin presented the slate of officers for 2025 as recommended by the Nominating Committee. President– Donna Benjamin (second term), Vice President– Ellen Brenner (first term), Treasurer– vacant Secretary– Daniel Karin (second term). Ms. Salluzzo MADE A MOTION to approve the slate of officers for 2025 as presented and recommended by the Nominating Committee. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2025 RPL Board Meeting Schedule

Ms. Uttaro presented the proposed meeting schedule. Ms. Brenner MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed schedule of 2025 RPL Board meetings. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL/MCLS Service Contract

Ms. Uttaro presented the item to the trustees. She explained this is typically a two or three-year contract however, Ms. Hasselwander is recommending a one-year contract to allow the upcoming new Library Director an opportunity to see the current contract in place and potentially offer changes to the next version. Ms. Drury MADE A MOTION to approve the RPL/MCLS Services contract for the term January 1, 2025–December 31, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Late Closing of Bausch and Lomb First Floor on Tuesday, April 22

Ms. Uttaro presented the item to the trustees. Ms. Baynes MADE A MOTION to approve extended hours to 8:00 p.m. for the first floor of the Bausch and Lomb Public Library Building on Tuesday, April 22, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Early Closure of RPL on New Year's Eve

Ms. Uttaro presented the item to the trustees. Ms. Drury MADE A MOTION to approve early closure of all RPL locations at 5:00 on December 31, 2024. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Early Closing of Rundel Building First Floor on Saturday, December 14

Ms. Uttaro presented the item to the trustees. Ms. Baynes MADE A MOTION to approve early closing at 1:00 p.m. for the first floor of the Rundel Memorial Library Building on Saturday, December 14, 2024. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ellen Brenner left the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Liaison to the Monroe County Library System (MCLS) Board

Ms. Drury reported that the MCLS Board approved a three-year contract with The Library Corporation for the CARL system and the RPL/MCLS Service Contract. There was also an announcement that the county legislature will appoint Christine Ridarsky as the Monroe County Historian.

Liaison from the Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library (FFRPL)

Ms. Borgus reminded everyone that Tuesday, December 3 is Roc the Day and the FFRPL will be using raised funds to support the Comic program in the imagineYOU lab.

Liaison from the Reynolds Library Board

Ms. Salluzzo reported that the Reynolds Board approved an additional \$17,000 for the recent Washington D.C. trip for youth from the Safe to be Smart Program. The original budget for the trip was developed prior to the pandemic and since the trip was postponed until this year, the actual cost was higher. The board also approved a \$4,700 donation to the Harold Hacked Fund for the Advancement of Libraries in honor of Director Uttaro on her retirement. \$4,700 represents \$100 for each year of her 47-year career.

Director's Report/Central & Community Libraries

Ms. Uttaro offered to answer questions about the written report. For the Community Libraries, she reported that Melanie Lewis, Deputy Director is using up some of her accrued vacation time and will officially retire at the end of the year. Bruce Tehan, the Branch Supervisor at Arnett, will be moving into the position of Area Coordinator. The current Area Coordinator, Erin Clarke will move into the role of supervisor in the Arts and Literature Division. Ms. Clasper, Ms. Smathers, and Ms. Hasselwander are heading the committee to fill the Deputy Director position and several good applications have already been received.

Next, she asked everyone to mark their calendars for the press conference launching the RPL GO! bookmobile on December 19 at 10:00 at the Lyell Branch Library. There will be a ribbon cutting with Mayor Evans, Senator Cooney, and Kirsten Piper Brown, the parent from the Parent Leadership Training Institute who first brought the idea of reviving a bookmobile to her and Ms. Lewis in 2021.

Ms. Smathers reported that the School Library Journal is a national publication that is likely to feature a story soon about the recent Safe to be Smart Washington D.C. trip.

Ms. Uttaro reported she will be out of the office December 4–18. She will rely on her management team to handle anything urgent in her absence.

Next, she shared that Brie Harrison may stay on as the Manager of Capital Projects for an additional year. This would be extremely helpful given the likelihood of building a new branch in the Northeast quadrant.

Ms. Uttaro thanked Ms. Clasper for her competent handling of two back-to-back events last Thursday that led to an early closing for the Central Library. The first event was allegedly armed men entering the library presumably looking for someone. The second was a car accident with injuries at the corner of Broad and South Avenues. EMTs used the Bausch & Lomb Building breezeway as part of their triage space. Both Ms. Uttaro and Ms. Suro were out of the office, so Ms. Clasper bared the brunt of the responsibility for handling these situations. Ms. Uttaro then explained that she is investigating the use of metal detectors and the possibility of going down to only one entrance for both buildings. She is in conversations with staff at the city to determine codes and cost for a metal detector. She is also planning to ask the mayor and the police chief if an RPD officer can be stationed in the library every day.

Executive Session

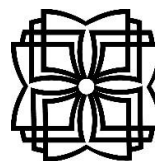
Mr. Kraus MADE A MOTION to go into executive session at 9:43 a.m. to discuss the recommendation of the New Director Search Committee. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. President Benjamin invited Donna Borgus, Mitch Gruber, and Ana Suro to stay.

Ms. Salluzzo MADE A MOTION to come out of executive session at 10:24 a.m. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

Dan Karin, Secretary



**Joint MCLS & RPL Board of Trustees Meeting
Kusler-Cox Auditorium, Rundel Memorial Library Building
December 06, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
Minutes**

MCLS Trustees Present: Gary Brandt, Kimberly Brown, Christopher Corcoran, Alinda Drury, Emily Hessney Lynch, Peter Knapp, Amy Moffitt, Marjorie Shelly, (quorum present)

MCLS Trustees Excused: Mack Smith, Erick Stephens, Suzanne Stockman (observed online)

RPL Trustees Present: Katherine Baynes, Donna Benjamin, Ellen Brenner, Alinda Drury, Glenn Gardner, Daniel Karin, James Kraus, Sarah Murphy Abbamonte, Jeffrey Tucker (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused: Suzanne Stockman (observed online)

Staff and Guests: County Law Liaison, Keana Williams; City Law Liaison, Allison Bartlett; City Council Liaison, Mitch Gruber; staff members Emily Clasper, Katy Hasselwander, Debi Mansour, Ana Suro

Call to Order

Mr. Corcoran called the MCLS Board meeting to order at 3:04 a.m. welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Ms. Benjamin called the RPL Board meeting to order at 3:04 a.m. welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comments

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to address the boards.

MCLS Action Item: Springshare Professional Services Agreement

Ms. Hasselwander presenting the item to the MCLS trustees and offered to answer questions. After a brief discussion, Dr. Knapp MADE A MOTION to approve a professional Services agreement with Springshare, LLC for its Patron Point service in an amount not to exceed \$19,860.01 through December 31, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Joint Executive Session

Without objection, Presidents Corcoran and Benjamin called a joint executive session to discuss the selection of the new Library Director.

The minutes of the MCLS Executive Session on November 18 were approved without objection.

The minutes of the RPL Executive Session on November 26 were approved without objection.

The Boards adjourned their joint executive session at 3:35 p.m.

Joint Action Item: Appointment of a New Library Director

For the RPL Board, Ms. Brenner MADE A MOTION to appoint Emily Clasper as the new Library Director and ask current Director Patty Uttaro to choose a starting date of either January 13 or January 20, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

For the MCLS Board, Mr. Brandt MADE A MOTION to appoint Emily Clasper as the new Library Director and ask current Director Patty Uttaro to choose a starting date of either January 13 or January 20, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Other Business

Mr. Corcoran acknowledged the hard work of the selection committee in finding a new library Director.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Debi Mansour on behalf of Patricia Uttaro, MCLS Secretary
Daniel Karin, RPL Secretary

**ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY
PERSONNEL CHANGES
November 12, 2024 – January 10, 2025**

➤ **NEW HIRES**

Anatra, Catherine	Library Page/PT/Central/Circulation Department	12/18/24
Farrell, Afiya	Librarian I/PT/Sub/Central/Children's Center	12/18/24
Hazen, Norah	Library Page/PT/Central/Circulation Department	12/30/24
Lewis, Kassady	Librarian I/PT/Monroe Branch	12/16/24
McCullough, Jerome	Library Page/PT/Lyell Branch	12/23/24
Ng, Clara	Clerk Typist/PT/Maplewood Branch	11/12/24

➤ **PROMOTIONS**

Ahmed, Mir	FROM: Clerk Typist/PT/Lyell Branch	12/30/2024
	TO: Clerk III/Typing/PT/Lyell Branch	
Anthony, Lily	FROM: Librarian I/PT/Central/Business Insight Center	01/06/2025
	TO: Business Support Specialist/FT/Business Insight Center	
Catlin, Danielle	FROM: Literacy Aide/PT/Lyell Branch	12/30/2024
	TO: Clerk Typist/PT/Lyell Branch	
Downey, Ian	FROM: Clerk Typist/PT/Monroe Branch	01/06/2025
	TO: Clerk III/Typing/PT/Monroe Branch	
Eckerson, Rachael	FROM: Clerk Typist/PT/Central/Circulation Department	01/06/2025
	TO: Clerk III/Typing/PT/Central/Circulation Department	
Harr, Jace	FROM: Clerk Typist/PT/Wheatley Branch	12/05/2024
	TO: Library Assistant/PT/Central/Circulation Department	
Mangione, Richard	FROM: Clerk III/Typing/PT/Central/Circulation Department	12/02/2024
	TO: Clerk III/FT/Central/Business Insight Center	
Neumaier, Anna	FROM: Librarian I/PT/Sub/Branch Administration	01/02/2025
	TO: Librarian I/FT/Central/Business Insight Center	
Padilla, Marguerite	FROM: Library Page/PT/Wheatley Branch	12/02/2024
	TO: Clerk Typist/PT/Wheatley Branch	
Tehan, Bruce	FROM: Branch Manager/FT/Arnett Branch	12/16/2024
	TO: Library Area Coordinator/FT/Branch Administration	

Personnel Changes
November 12, 2024 – January 10, 2025
Page 2

➤ **TRANSFERS**

Brewer, Eve	FROM: Clerk III/Typing/PT/Central/Circulation Department	12/09/2024
	TO: Clerk III/Typing/PT/Central/Outreach Department	
Clarke, Erin	FROM: Library Area Coordinator/FT/Branch Adm.	12/30/2024
	TO: Librarian II/FT/Central/Arts & Literature Department	

➤ **RESIGNATIONS**

Jahan, Nusrat	Literacy Aide/PT/Wheatley Branch	12/23/24
Nitzan, Barak	Library Page/PT/Lyell Branch	12/18/24
Vargas-Dixon, Amanda	Librarian/PT/Central/MCLS Office	12/13/24

➤ **RETIREMENTS**

Arnold, Cherrin	Clerk III/Typing/PT/Monroe Branch	01/03/2025
	34 YEARS OF SERVICE	
Lewis, Melanie	Deputy Director of Community Libraries/FT/Branch Adm.	12/27/24
	24 YEARS OF SERVICE	

STAFFING

Full-Time Positions	Central	Branches
Budgeted	81	31
Filled	81	26
Vacancies	0	5
Part-time Positions	Central	Branches
Budgeted	122	136
Filled	73	101
Vacancies	49	35

**Rochester Public Library
Financial Report – Summary
January 29, 2025, Board Meeting**

Central Financial Report, December 2024

Salary & Benefits: Salaries, wages, and overtime within budget. Other pay categories, including perfect attendance and longevity hit.

Equipment & Supplies: Materials purchases and other expenses are projected within budget.

Services & Charges: Biannual online fines invoice from MCLS (\$11K) reflected in professional fees.

Cash Capital: No new expenses since October. BLB elevator repair expense hits using reserved FY23 & FY24 capital funds (\$32K). Remaining funds are reserved for planned expenses (HVAC) and unknown needs with upcoming construction projects. Report only reflects FY25 funds, which remain unspent.

Community Financial Report, December 2024

Salary & Benefits: Salaries and wages are within budget. Other pay categories, including perfect attendance and longevity hit.

Equipment & Supplies: Materials purchases and supplies are within budget.

Services & Charges: Biannual cost share invoice from MCLS (\$155K) reflected in professional services.

Cash Capital: Prior year rollover funds utilized for card reader access, technology equipment, and laptop purchases. Current year expenses for outreach van expenses including small equipment and wrapping, and minor furniture purchases. Remaining funds are reserved for other planned expenses including for NE branch design services.

Central Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25 Fiscal YTD (through December 31, 2025)					
Category	Description	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expenses FISCAL YTD	Remaining Balance % of Budget
Salary & Benefits	Full-Time Salaries	4,943,000	4,943,000	2,515,189	2,427,811 50.9%
	Part-Time/Temp Salaries	1,597,400	1,586,300	699,284	887,016 44.1%
	Overtime	17,500	17,500	12,700	4,800 72.6%
	Employee Benefits	3,310,600	3,310,600	1,101,103	2,209,497 33.3%
	Employee Development	27,700	30,216	19,690	10,526 65.2%
	Other	59,800	59,800	17,320	42,480 29.0%
Sub Total		9,956,000	9,947,416	4,365,287	5,582,129 43.9%
Equipment & Supplies	Materials Budget	505,000	507,214	228,388	278,826 45.0%
	Other Furnishings & Equipment	10,100	10,100	0	10,100 0.0%
	Office Supplies	56,500	59,143	22,077	37,066 37.3%
	Other Materials & Supplies	51,000	55,175	19,700	35,475 35.7%
	Sub Total	622,600	631,632	270,165	361,466 42.8%
Services & Charges	Utilities	467,500	467,500	221,245	246,255 47.3%
	Facility Maintenance	103,400	132,962	39,817	93,145 29.9%
	Professional Services/Fees	221,600	228,997	149,177	79,820 65.1%
	Chargebacks	80,700	92,628	29,750	62,877 32.1%
	Service Charges - Other Gov't	51,400	51,400	0	51,400 0.0%
	Telecommunications	14,200	15,200	4,291	10,909 28.2%
	Other Expenses	204,400	227,022	68,005	159,017 30.0%
	Sub Total	1,143,200	1,215,708	512,285	703,424 42.1%
TOTAL EXPENSED		11,721,800	11,794,756	5,147,737	6,647,019 43.9%
Central Cash Capital	Facility Maintenance Allocation	94,000	94,000	0	94,000 0.0%
REVENUE RECEIPTS		11,736,100	11,736,100	3,023,129	8,712,971
		Original Budget	Revised Budget	Central Library Support from City + Central Revenue	Outstanding Revenue

Community Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25						
Fiscal YTD (through December 31, 2025)						
Category	Description	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expenses FISCAL YTD	Remaining Balance	% of Budget
Salary & Benefits	Full-Time Salaries	2,080,100	2,076,500	985,736	1,090,764	47.5%
	Part-Time/Temp Salaries	2,026,400	2,021,400	953,497	1,067,903	47.2%
	Overtime	2,000	2,000	6,816	-4,816	340.8%
	Employee Development	22,900	26,610	10,978	15,633	41.3%
	Other	28,300	28,300	5,067	23,233	17.9%
Sub Total		4,159,700	4,154,810	1,962,094	2,169,484	47.2%
Equipment & Supplies	Materials Budget	496,600	502,973	214,723	288,250	42.7%
	Office Supplies	37,700	37,806	17,060	20,746	45.1%
	Other Materials & Supplies	34,500	35,512	13,184	22,328	37.1%
Sub Total		568,800	576,292	244,968	331,324	42.5%
Services & Charges	Utilities	224,500	229,993	79,732	150,261	34.7%
	Facility Maintenance	39,000	39,496	7,677	31,820	19.4%
	Professional Services/Fees	376,800	381,042	174,914	206,129	45.9%
	Chargebacks	27,300	36,982	19,635	17,347	53.1%
	Service Charges - Other Gov't	7,500	7,500	0	7,500	0.0%
	Telecommunications	21,400	22,631	4,632	17,998	20.5%
	Other Expenses	52,500	59,266	12,908	46,358	21.8%
	Sub Total	749,000	776,910	299,497	477,413	38.5%
TOTAL EXPENSED		5,477,500	5,508,012	2,506,558	2,978,221	45.5%
Community Cash Capital	Computers & Equipment	10,000	10,000	583	9,417	5.8%
	Library Furnishings	12,000	12,000	2,501	9,499	20.8%
	Library Facilities	41,000	41,000	0	41,000	0.0%
	Library Capital Projects*	40,000				
Cash Capital Total		103,000	63,000	3,084	59,916	4.9%
REVENUE RECEIPTS		390,461	390,461	223,680	166,781	
		Original Budget	Revised Budget	Receipts FISCAL YTD	Outstanding Revenue	
* Projects administered by City DES						

Trust Funds Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25						
Fiscal YTD (through December 31, 2025)						
	Allocation	Carry-forward	TOTAL	YTD Expenses	% of Total	
Reynolds Fund - RPL	4229	\$144,857	\$70,945	\$215,802	\$73,378	34.0%
Fenevessy (Central + Branch bal)	4224	\$31,369	\$25,278	\$56,647	\$51,357	90.7%
Kenyon-Jeffries Fund	4233	\$20,191	\$10,806	\$7,497	\$2,250	30.0%
Purton Fund	4231	\$17,007	\$3,716	\$20,723	\$6,044	29.2%
Gleason Fund	4225	\$15,862				
Gleason Fund (FFRPL)	4225	\$12,183	\$15,427	\$43,472	\$12,273	28.2%
Gervickas Fund	4235	\$6,045	\$8,157	\$14,203	\$696	4.9%
Taylor Fund	4226	\$3,610	\$4,030	\$7,640	\$1,005	13.2%
Boland Fund	4232	\$1,541	\$1,535	\$3,076	\$168	5.5%
Carnahan Fund	4228	\$1,555	\$0	\$1,555	\$810	52.1%
Poletto Fund	4234	\$1,555	\$0	\$1,555	\$953	61.3%
Beeney Fund (FFRPL)	4227	\$4,878	\$2,829	\$7,707	\$212	2.8%
Craig Fund (FFRPL)	4236	\$2,716	\$1,209	\$3,925	\$53	1.3%
Holtzman Fund (FFRPL)	4239	\$1,560	\$1,851	\$3,411	\$499	14.6%
Lee Fund (FFRPL)	4237	\$1,475	\$2,581	\$4,056	\$92	2.3%
Vietnam Veterans Fund (FFRPL)	4238	\$688	\$2,161	\$2,849	\$0	0.0%
Tummonds Fund (FFRPL)	4241	\$88,391	\$54,141	\$142,532	\$53,973	37.9%
TOTAL		\$355,483	\$204,667	\$536,650	\$203,763	38.0%
Gift Fund Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25						
Fiscal YTD (through December 31, 2025)						
Fund	Allocation	Transfer In	TOTAL	YTD Expenses	% of Total	
Gift Fund	4230	\$4,244	\$25,910	\$30,154	\$140	0.5%



115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

TO: RPL Board of Trustees
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director
DATE: January 29, 2025
SUBJECT: Monthly Report–January 2025

Action Items

Monroe Branch Additional Hours Request (Uttaro)

The Monroe Branch Manager is planning a musical program for March 6 and requests a one-hour extension of open hours for that day. The Resonanz ensemble of the Rochester Oratorio Society will perform beginning at 7:00 p.m. and will play through to 8:00 p.m. Typically the branch closes at 7:00.

Board Action Requested: Approve the one-hour extension of open hours for Monroe on March 6, 2025.

Lyell Branch Hours Update (Uttaro & Clasper)

We are requesting approval of the modification of Lyell hours to accommodate the mobile library, RPL GO! As discussed previously with this board, we are proposing a modification of services available on Tuesdays and Thursdays to provide time for staff to operate RPL GO! The services available on-site at the branch will be limited to basic services while staff are on the road visiting other sites. This request is presented now to provide the Branch Manager, Dennis Williams, and his staff with time to test the RPL GO! procedures, get used to driving the van, and make connections to various locations that have requested stops by the vehicle.

	Current Hours On-Site	New Hours On-Site	New Hours RPL GO
Monday	11:00–6:00	11:00–6:00	Not on the road
Tuesday	11:00–6:00	11:00–4:00 (limited service)	9:00–5:00
Wednesday	12:00–6:00	12:00–6:00	Not on the road
Thursday	12:00–6:00	11:00–4:00 (limited service)	9:00–5:00
Friday	11:00–5:00	11:00–5:00	Not on the road
Saturday	11:00–3:00	11:00–3:00	Not on the road

Details on how this process will work initially include:

- On Tuesdays and Thursdays at the branch, limited express services will be available in the community room. There will be one 15-minute computer, a fax machine, and printer available. Staff

will have computer access to accommodate borrowing and issuing library cards. Staff will be able to access the copy/scanning machine for patrons and retrieve materials from within the library.

- New hours signage includes the phone number to request a visit from the RPL GO! Sites can also request a visit by filling out the form: <https://roccitylibrary.org/services/mobile-library-request/>
- It is essential that staff get comfortable with traveling around in the van, so for the first few weeks staff will visit every daycare and school in the 14606 zip-code for a meet and greet.
- Initial visits will focus on letting people know what services are available—computer assistance, story times, programming, faxing, printing, free wifi, technology assistance, checking out library materials, getting library cards.
- Visits will be staffed and supported by 2 individuals (there are only 2 seats in the van). Best practices indicate always having a second person in the van.
- Advertising includes social media such as Facebook and Instagram, along with the MCLS events calendar, and of course, the most effective advertising: word of mouth.
- The initial plan of service includes getting comfortable in a traveling library and gaining an understanding of exactly what services and programs are desired and where.

Board Action Requested: Approve new hours for the Lyell Branch Library and RPL GO! bookmobile.

Tummonds Report (Uttaro)

The Friends and Foundation of RPL annually require that boards which receive money from the Tummonds Fund formally approve and certify use of those funds in the prior year. This anonymous private fund is used to supplement popular reading material in print, audio, and electronic formats. Libraries in MCLS (except Irondequoit), the OWWL System (except Wyoming County), and NIOGA System members in Genesee and Orleans Counties receive money annually based on circulation in the previous year. In 2024, the Rochester Public Library used its FFRPL Tummonds Fund grant to purchase supplemental circulating materials of 4,959 e-books and 1,002 audiobooks, at a cost equal to or exceeding \$88,394.13. This action is required under the terms of the Tummonds bequest to FFRPL and certifies that libraries receiving funds have not reduced other sources of funds for purchase of materials.

Board Action Requested: Approve the 2024 Tummonds Fund report.

Agreement, Children's Division Pathology Services (Hasselwander)

The Central Children's Division has seen an increase in patron requests for services related to speech development. This agreement will allow the division to regularly provide programming designed to support children's speech and language development. The programming ranges from games, storytelling, and interactive play. The vendor has previously provided one-off programming for the Library and is a professional speech pathologist. Each session is \$140.

Board Action Requested: Approve a professional service agreement not to exceed \$2,500 with Devann Lowe for speech pathologist programming through June 30, 2025.

Agreement Amendment, RIT for Rochester History Journal (Hasselwander & Clasper)

This Board approved an agreement with RIT Press at the June 29, 2022, meeting for the production of the Rochester History Journal. Under the agreement, RIT Press publishes two print issues of Rochester History per year, at a rate not to exceed a total amount of \$5,000 per year (\$2,250 per issue). RIT Press also built and maintains an interactive website for the journal. The total agreement amounts to \$13,500, over three years. This agreement is funded through the Kenyon-Jefferies trust fund. The agreement expires June 30, 2025.

In 2024, RIT Press leadership reached out to Director Uttaro to express concern with the costs of the journal's production. This item will increase the maximum compensation to include a one-time payment for costs related to past issues of the journal, including copy editing, digitizing, website hosting and administrative expenses. This item does not change any other terms of the agreement.

Board Action Requested: Approve an increase in compensation to RIT Press for an agreement related to the production of Rochester History by \$6,000 to a maximum compensation of \$19,500.

Report & Discussion Items

RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

When the boards voted to appoint me as MCLS/RPL Director in February 2009, I had spent 2 years at Central working with the previous Director, Paula Smith, and 27 years in various roles at libraries in the Monroe County Library System. I felt I knew the system, knew its leaders and staff, knew the community, and I entered the role of Director with a tremendous sense of optimism and enthusiasm for the future. Sixteen years later, I leave the role with same sense of optimism and enthusiasm for the future of all MCLS and RPL libraries.

While I felt I knew the system, I found that I did not know RPL very well at all. Visiting the branches and getting to know the staff and community were experiences that changed me. The people working for RPL and in City government are some of the best people I have ever known. The drive to empower our community members and provide the programs and services they need and want was something that I admired and aspired to as I got to know our neighborhoods.

Over the years, I have benefited from and truly appreciated the support given me by various RPL library trustees, beginning with John Lovenheim, Dick Hamilton, and Donna Benjamin. I learned about finance and investing from John and Dick and learned about the importance of community from Donna. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Pete French, who served on the Reynolds Board for many years and was a contemporary of Harold Hacker. Pete gave me very valuable advice early on when he told me: "Be teachable. You don't know everything and you're not always right." I've kept that advice in mind over the years and found it to be immensely valuable. While there have been many trustees over the years who have supported my vision for our Rochester community, these four stand out and I thank them for their support.

Several RPL staff have demonstrated unwavering understanding of the library mission and impressed me with their dedication: Joe Born and his staff, who took on the tremendous responsibility of developing our

MiFi loan program and ramped it up in less than a week at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020; Margaret Chatterton and Renee Kendrot who have shown unwavering support for the development and protection of our part-time staff through their years of work with CSEA; Cynthia Dana, who exemplifies the term *public service*; Derrick Coley, who provided unwavering commitment to our teen population and transformed the way this library provides service through Safe To Be Smart; Kevin Loughran (former Finance Director) who counseled me before I accepted the Director position and who told me "Just remember, we like everyone!" I have been fortunate to have had an outstanding senior management team throughout my time here, especially Ana Suro and Brie Harrison without whom RPL would be less today. Their wisdom, creativity, and persistence have restored positions, renovated libraries, and secured funding over the course of several years. While there are too many to mention specifically, I'll call out ALL the Branch and Central staff who take the RPL vision and deliver it to the community every day, with a special thank you to the invaluable Gail Boldt and Debi Mansour who wrangled my calendar and kept the Director's Office running. You will see examples of the impactful work being done by Branch and Central staff as you read through this report. Our staff makes a difference, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have worked with all of them.

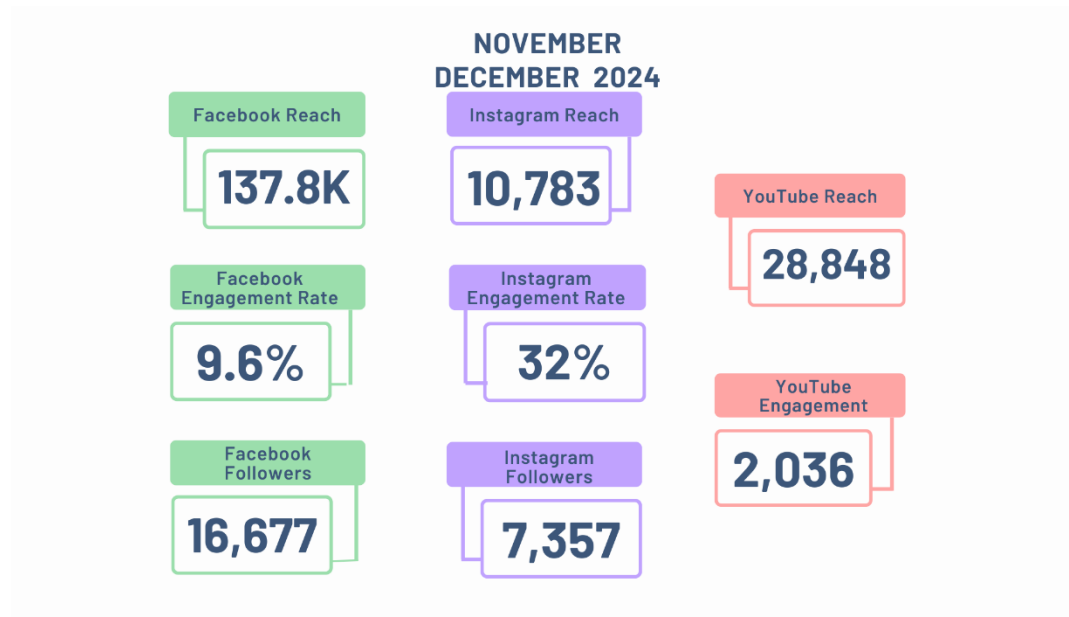
All those years ago in 2009, I was asked by the boards to provide a list of things I wanted them to know about me and things I believed. Certainly, some of those things have changed over the years (my kids are grown adults today!), but the core of my belief system hasn't changed. I believed then and I believe now that our public library system is the equalizer in our culture. Libraries provide services to every person without regard to race, religion, gender, or any other category or identity. Over the years, there have been multiple marketing campaigns and slogans about libraries. The one that still resonates with me is the ALA campaign that stated, "Libraries Change Lives." I believed it then and I believe it now. The proof is in the myriad personal stories shared by our patrons every day.

I leave RPL with some sadness but also with much joy and hope. You have selected an amazing new leader in Emily Clasper, and I am very much anticipating the wonderful and exciting directions she takes you and our libraries in the coming years. I also leave with an abundance of gratitude to you, our trustees, and to our staff and community members who have shown me time and again that libraries are crucial to the quality of life in Rochester and Monroe County. Thank you for your support and dedication. I wish you all the very best.

Artificial Intelligence Comic Book Agreement, FFRPL and Cooley Comics

FFRPL was successful in raising funds to support this popular program in the imagineYou digital media lab at Central and is executing an agreement with Cooley Comics LLC to continue the services. The provider will continue facilitation of the popular Artificial Intelligence Comic Book Labs for up to 10 teens per lab to design, create, and print comic books. The rate is \$200 per comic, not to exceed \$12,000 total. The labs will be held monthly, beginning in February. FFRPL is funding this agreement through Roc the Day proceeds, unrestricted funds for ImagineYou, and a private donation. RPL and imagineYou staff are very grateful to FFRPL for providing the funds to keep this program going.

Social Media



Central Library

Emily Clasper reporting

- Lily Anthony and Cynthia Dana had a table at Three Heads Brewing on Sunday December 1 for a Nostalgic Book Fair and Market, sponsored by Freak Out Parties. Many people who stopped by were delighted to learn about the VIP passes.
- Emily Clasper spoke several times with the Executive Director of Urban Libraries Unite, the organization responsible for developing the Library Worker Support Network. This program is designed to offer library workers peer-led support to help them process the difficult and often traumatic experiences they face on the job. RPL employees have been encouraged to reach out to this network to join one of their support groups and gain access to their resources.
- Clasper and Chelsea Arnold attended the Winter Breakfast hosted by the Greater Rochester Afterschool & Summer Alliance. This networking event allowed Clasper and Arnold to make valuable connections with people from other organizations who provide after school activities and programs for Rochester children and teens.
- Clasper has been involved in several planning sessions for the Rochester and Monroe County Arts and Culture Plan. The consultants and local officials she met with have repeatedly expressed how impressed they are with the ways in which the libraries contribute to the cultural life of our community. RPL is now slated to be a vital part of the forthcoming efforts to strategically pursue Arts and Cultural programs in partnership with other City and County departments.
- A cross-divisional team of Central Library staff are busy planning a series of events to celebrate Black History Month. The main event of the month will be a Black Owned Business Expo showcasing the work of a variety of Black entrepreneurs. Planning for this event has generated a lot of excitement from both staff and community members. Businesses of several types have responded enthusiastically, volunteering to participate, and we expect a strong turnout for the event.

Children's Center, Tonia Burton reporting

Programs

- Children's Center and Raising a Reader staff partnered with WXXI to host a Family Game Night. WXXI encouraged families to make their own games and games were set up in KGA. The importance of bedtime routines was emphasized with bedtime play. Hairstylists were present to demonstrate hair care. Two PBS characters from the show *Lyla in the Loop* came to meet children in person—Lyla and Stu.



- The Children's Center arranged for a local speech pathologist to offer programs to young children and the opportunity to speak with parents. Parents were excited about these programs. There are plans for more speech programs in January.
- Four classes of second grade students from Harris Hill Elementary School visited the library. Students had fun finding the Secret Room, going on a tour of the library, and engaging in a scavenger hunt. When Miranda Hazen was giving an overview of the Bausch & Lomb building, explaining it opened in 1997, one student raised his hand and asked, "Was that 100 years ago?"
- Rochester Korean Percussion Ensemble presented a drumming workshop featuring the Janggu, the Korean hourglass drum. Each participant played their own janggu, learning rhythms that culminated in the whole group playing along to a BTS song. The performers commented that they have never played for a more enthusiastic crowd!
- Katie Powell hosted a sensory play session in the Secret Room, featuring activities that engage a child's senses. Through sensory play, children explore materials hands-on, which helps them build cognitive skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making. Activities included a gross motor shape sorting game, sensory bins, and a pool filled with shredded paper. One parent commented that she appreciated that her child could come to the library and try new messy activities that she would not be comfortable doing in their home.





- The Children's Center also facilitated a Cubetto program for ages 4-8. Cubetto is a screen-free coding robot that teaches children early coding principles and computational thinking. Participants led Cubetto through a series of routes on his map, "debugging" their code if necessary.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Tonia Burton and Chelsea Arnold staffed a table the Rochester Children's Book Festival with help from Director Uttaro. Families from all over New York, Canada, and Ohio attended the event that featured fifty authors from around the country. Hazen developed an election day voting activity that was turned into an Early Voting location. The election was to elect the Children's Center President and Vice President. Children and adults had a great time and there were several debates about which candidate should win. It was interesting to see that with even a fake election, it's not easy to change voter's opinions. At the end of early voting Piggie was ahead with 284 votes, Dog Man had 261.
- Burton and Arnold met with other RPL Children's Services staff to discuss the Unattended Child Policy, summer reading, and Raising A Reader.
- Children's Center staff attended the MCLS Children's Services meeting which was held at Central. Uttaro discussed the importance of advocating for children's services.
- Arnold has begun outreach to Wilson Commencement Park's housing after school group, sharing books and activities with children ranging in age from kindergarten to fourth grade.
- Burton and Olivia Cutter attended RCSD #54 Reading Block party. They gave out books to grades Kindergarten through 6th grade.
- Arnold and Burton attended the Rochester General Hospital Annual Christmas event and gave out new books to the children attending. The event hosted hundreds of families from the Rochester area. Children got to meet Santa, have dinner, make Christmas crafts, and get a toy and book.
- Chelsea Arnold joined other RPL staff at the ribbon cutting for the RPLGO! Bookmobile, representing the Children's Center.





Raising A Reader

RAR staff spent the month supporting teachers in implementing RAR in their classrooms and having RAR kickoff celebrations. These celebrations are created to get the kids, staff and families excited about RAR and receiving their shiny new bag filled with books. Margarita Chaves attended 2 family engagement activities with families at school #50. Chaves utilized this time to engage with families, sharing information about RAR, and answering their questions. RAR staff Cheryl Johnson and Oliva Cutter also completed kickoff celebrations at school #54, RECEC and at the CBO sites that we are serving this year. Burton and Oliva Cutter completed RAR training for VOA staff on the research behind the program and how it works. Burton and Cutter attended Generations Clinton Square's Curriculum Night to provide information about the program to parents. RAR staff continued to support classroom teachers in rotating red bags this month.



Arts/Literature, Erin Clarke reporting

Programs

- Sigriet of Prismatic Gardens returned to teach a fun winter themed air plant terrarium class. Participants loved Sigriet's fast knowledge of air plants and how to care for them. They also loved all the different items that were available to decorate the terrariums with. Many patrons have asked for more terrarium classes, and more are being planned for the coming year.

- Shannon Halligan returned with a craft that was inspired by Victorian Christmas traditions. Halligan spoke about the history of Victorian paper cones while teaching the class. Participants enjoyed the history behind the craft and loved the results.
- Popular writing instructor Jen Case continued with her winter writing series via zoom. Participants were excited to learn that she will be returning in February with a fresh writing series.

Business Insight Center (BIC), Jennifer Byrnes, reporting



Programs

- *Small Business Retirement Planning* presented by Troy Gribnau from Edward Jones.
- Business 1st Wednesday (November): *Small Business Financial Statements*, presented by Melissa Jordan from M&T Bank.
- *The Science of Cannabis* presented by Educating and Elevating with Cannabis. *The Science of Cannabis* was a three-part series that offered an immersive experience focused on cannabis science, career development, and industry insights.
- *Budtending and Terpology* presented by April Smith of Cannabis Workforce initiative. Terpenes are the aromatic compounds responsible for the unique flavors and scents found in different cannabis strains. This program educated attendees on how to be a better budtender and understanding the role of terpenes in cannabis use.
- *Hiring the Right Cannabis Employees – Essentials for Business Success*. Sara Edwards and Charles Johnson from Cannabis Workforce Initiative presented.
- Business 1st Wednesday (December): *Preparing Your Small Business for Tax Season* with the Small Business Development Center. Presented by Edwin and Jessica Spencer of Sunlion Financial Group

Outreach and Training

- Byrnes presented to the Manufacturing Hardware Accelerator; a cohort-based program led by Rev: Ithaca Startup Works that supports hardware startups that are ready to bring their prototypes into production. The program is funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration and offered in partnership with Cornell Engineering.
- Melissa Cobo attended the 2024 Economic Development Summit sponsored by ROCEDC and Venture Jobs Foundation.
- Melissa Cobo attended the Beechwood & EMMA (East Main, Mustard & Atlantic Avenue) Business Networking Event hosted by Connected Communities and the Casa Campo restaurant.
- Jennifer Byrnes and Anna Neumaier are participating in the Digital Equity Academy through the New York State Library. Over the course of seven months, they will delve into the essential aspects of digital equity, from understanding its importance to developing and implementing effective strategies.

Consulting

November

- Hours of in-depth market research/prior art searching: 55
- The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted:
 - In person: 1
 - Email: 19
 - Mail: 0
 - Phone: 0
 - Zoom: 5
- 3D Printer: 1
- Webpage views: 28
- Requests Outside Greater Rochester Area: 13
- Referrals to Tracy Jong (Intellectual Property Attorney): 1
- Referrals to Davis Bassett (Patent Agent): 3

December

- Hours of in-depth market research/prior art searching: 37
- The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted:
 - In person: 2
 - Email: 13
 - Mail: 0
 - Phone: 0
 - Zoom: 2
- 3D Printer: 51
- Webpage views: 22
- Requests Outside Greater Rochester Area: 5
- Referrals to Tracy Jong (Intellectual Property Attorney): 1
- Referrals to Davis Bassett (Patent Agent): 1

Database Usage Statistics

October

- Frost & Sullivan: Page views: 4 Value: \$17,300
- IBISWorld: Page views: 84 Value: \$46,640
- InnovationQ: Logins: 23 Searches: 54
- Mintel: Sessions: 27 Page Views: 27 Downloads: 17
- PitchBook Logins: 25
- Statista: Page views: 48 Downloads: 12
- Foundation Directory: Searches: 43 Views: 182

November

- Frost & Sullivan - Page views: 20 Value: \$73,450
- IBISWorld - Page views: 58 Value: \$32,690
- InnovationQ - Logins: 12 Searches: 40
- Mintel - Sessions: 50 Page Views: 37 Downloads: 129
- PitchBook - Logins: 25
- Statista - Page views: 52 Downloads: 17
- Foundation Directory - Searches: 60 Views: 80

Anecdotes

- Byrnes worked with a gentleman in Georgia who wants to relocate his business to Rochester. She set him up with Greater Rochester Enterprise and Finger Lakes Economic Development. He immediately registered for a library card!
- We received this email from a client:
"Thank you for your help in providing the data on cocoa-related companies. Your support and the information you shared have been incredibly valuable to my work. I appreciate the time and effort you took to assist me with this request. Your responsiveness and the quality of the PitchBook data are truly appreciated. Thank you again for your help."

Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting

Statistics

- Curbside Pickup Appointments 0
- New Borrowers 253

- RRLC Access Cards Issued 10
- Notarial Acts 197

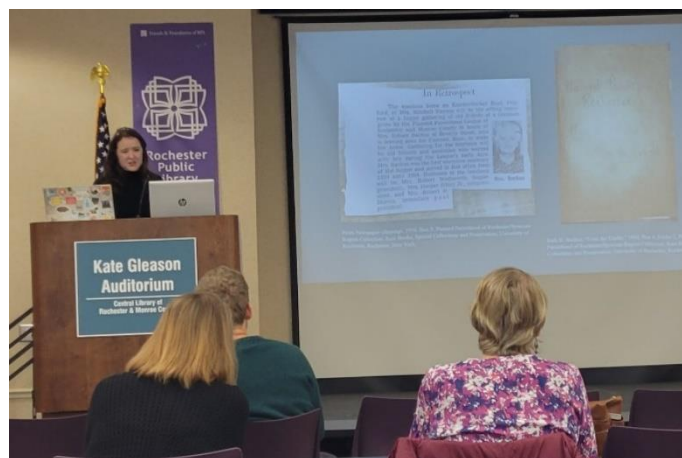
Anecdotes

- A couple came in needing some documents faxed. Chad Cunningham showed them the scan/print/fax machine and helped them to fax their paperwork. They were delighted to find out that faxing is free at the library. They also didn't know about the different scanning and faxing options we offer. They came in the next day to scan some documents to someone's e-mail.
- A couple came in to get library cards. During the process they found out about the VIP passes that MCLS offers. They had relatives coming up for the holidays and were debating where to take them. They decided to check out the Corning Museum of Glass passes. When they returned the passes a week later, they said that everyone had a wonderful time.
- A patron came in and told the staff at the Circulation Desk that his library card had made a perilous journey and did not survive the process. His dog, thinking library cards are both cool AND tasty, decided to snack on the card. In due course the card reappeared but was no longer able to be used. The dog was fine but is now on a strict no-library-card diet.

Local History & Genealogy, Shalis Worthy reporting

Programs

- The Fall 2024 edition of the *Rochester History Journal* Author Spotlight series took place on November 2nd with Elizabeth Carr's presentation, " 'A Great Sense of Pride:' Reflections on the Monroe County Birth Control League." Coinciding with the publication of Carr's feature article in the Fall 2024 issue of *Rochester History*, the talk highlighted the reminiscences of Monroe County Birth Control League staff and volunteers as well as other archival materials from the clinic. Eleven people attended in-person and three people attended virtually. 35 additional people viewed the livestream in the first 30 days of its posting.
- On November 9, Fess hosted, "Researching Black History in London, Ontario: The Black Londoners Project." Participants learned about a former Rochester resident who escaped slavery and eventually immigrated to Canada. This program was a valuable opportunity to record information on transnational Underground Railroad stories and to meet with Canadian peers researching these topics.



- Emily Morry and Brandon Fess hosted a visit from Suzanne Morgan's homeschool group. They discussed the history of early Rochester, the Erie Canal, and the Ellwanger and Barry Tract using maps from the division's collection.



Outreach/Meetings/Training

- McDonald attended the City of Rochester's Black Heritage Committee meeting twice during November after recently being added to the team. McDonald previously served on the Ancestors subcommittee and was asked to join the overarching Black Heritage Committee. Since joining, McDonald has joined the committee responsible for planning the Black Heritage's annual gala event taking place Saturday April 12th at 6:00 p.m. at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center. McDonald is also responsible for locating images of Rochester's Black working class during the nineteen fifties, sixties, and seventies to highlight the local impact of the national labor movement throughout history.
- Emily Morry gave a presentation at the Greece Public Library titled: "Virtual Walking Tour: Douglass, Anthony & Beyond- Activism and Social Justice in Rochester." It was well attended by an engaged audience.
- Antoine McDonald presented *Archives Talk: RPL Librarian Antoine McDonald & the Archive of Black History and Culture Project* to the Greece Public Library. This presentation detailed the origins of the archive, the work achieved thus far and a vision for the archive's future. McDonald also spoke about the Local History and Genealogy Division, and its capacity to aid patrons' information seeking needs with its vast array of print and digital resources.
- Dan Cody presented School of Aerial Photography During WWI at Kodak Park at "Unfurling 200 Years of RIT History" at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Other Activities

- There were two new posts to the Local History ROCs! blog in December:
 - "Gone Fishin': how one Rochester Resident Changed the Fishing World Forever," written by Cody.
 - "Lost Brewopia: Matthias Kondolf and the Moerlbach Brewing Company, pt. 1," written by Morry, who also edits the blog.

Anecdotes

- Morry encountered a family looking at the introductory case of the "Decanting Presidential History," exhibit, which showcases former mayor Frank Lamb and his presidential history collection. As it turns out, they came to the library specifically to see the exhibit because among the family members were Frank Lamb's daughter, and granddaughter.
- Fess assisted a researcher from France who contacted the library asking about statements that the library had the first coin-operated Xerox machine anywhere. Fess spent hours reading board minutes and monthly reports before he located a firm reference to it in the March 1966 report stating the machine was to be installed shortly.
- Christine Ridarsky attended a meeting of the Monroe County Legislature's Recreation and Education Committee at which she answered questions about her pending appointment (scheduled for December 10) as Monroe County Historian.



Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

Programs

- First Friday film (December): *Thelma*
- See it First Movie Matinee (November): *Twisters*
- See it First Movie Matinee (December): *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*
- Brown Bag Book (November): *Sam* by Allegra Goodman
- Brown Bag Book (December): Open book discussion w/Christmas merriment!
- RMC performed 17 A/V set ups for programs in the Central Library during November and 16 in December.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Diane Gardner met with Marion French (WXXI) about screening of a new Indie Film "Free to All: The Public Library." The program centered around this film will occur during National Library Week in April of 2025.

Science and History, Gabe Pellegrino reporting

Programs

Librarian Michael Callari is a partner with the Technology Center for its weekly Coding Club program series.

Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Gabriel Pellegrino represented the Central Library at the Center for Community Health & Prevention Community Partner Fair. CCHP is part of the University of Rochester Medical Center. This fair aims to stimulate interest among first- and second-year medical students to look for opportunities to share their talents. Pellegrino received many inquiries from curious students; the library was well-promoted and numerous handouts were shared. The Library has many programs through the CCHP, including hosting a weekly visit from URM students where vital checks are offered: blood pressure, blood sugar, weight, and heart rate. This team has been well-received by the local community.
- LROC (Library Resource Outreach Center) continued to be busy with several dozen people seen. Legal Assistance of Western New York (LawNY) continues to host monthly visits for legal assistance as well as the Health Insurance Navigator.
- Pellegrino attends the monthly Hearing Loss of America (HLAA) Rochester's Education & Outreach Team and frequently serves as scribe. The monthly newsletter of HLAA Rochester is sent to the Central Library and is distributed to all MCLS member libraries. HLAA is retooling its presentations to public libraries to provide less history on the organization and more practical information on current assistive listening devices for the public. After the successful donation of hearing loss books to the Monroe County libraries, HLAA is now looking to do the same throughout our neighboring OWWL libraries.
- Pellegrino attends the monthly meetings of the Wilmot Cancer Center's Cancer Community Action Council. There have been some changes in leadership, but the group continues to move forward to educate the underserved community in its large Western New York catchment area.



Collections, Displays, and Exhibits

- The display featuring cookbooks from popular television shows and movies continues to be popular, so it has remained, with additional holiday cooking and baking. Alaikia Miller created a beautiful display featuring winter animals and birds. There is also a new display of popular travel destinations for those with cabin fever.
- Pellegrino accepted several volumes of the Rochester Historical Society Publication Fund Series from Kathy Urbanic of the Sisters of St. Joseph Archives. The Science Division has incomplete sets of these volumes, and this gift will help to fill the gaps.

Technology Center, Jay Osborne Reporting

Anecdotes

- The Technology Center had been in operation in its current location long enough to have assisted some patrons through most of their college degrees. This past month, one of the patrons we have seen the longest came in and updated us on his academic progress. His grades are good and the completion of

his courses at MCC have taken time, but that is the nature of working and going to school part-time. He is uncompromising and is bent on personal progress. All he needed was the basic tools (knowledge of how to use a computer) from the Technology Center staff to make his own success. Another patron has needed more assistance and confided in us that he is frustrated that his grade point average will only be a 3.2 this semester. Next semester he is determined to get straight A's.

- During December, the Tech Center staff has seen an increased number of patrons needing help retrieving their email address and passwords from their phones. One patron came into the Tech Center and was very frustrated because his phone had been stolen the night prior. He had to log in to Uber on his temporary phone to get ride assignments and make money. He was practically in tears because Frontier migrated all email accounts to Yahoo and Yahoo was unable to verify his identity. After contacting Yahoo proved to be unsuccessful, staff contacted Uber, making sure that the patron was involved in every step of the process. Staff were able to restore apps on the patron's phone, log in to Uber, and update the patron's email, password, and bank information. Staff also educated the patron on safety features within his phone. He told Ginger Brewer, the staff member who helped him, the following, *"You are an angel. You don't know how much I was going to lose if I was not able to log in to Uber. You are my new best friend, and I thank you and all the staff for being patient and professional. I will never forget you taking the time with me and helping me. Thank you!"*



Teen Central, Shetora Banks and Jeff Bostic reporting

Programs

- John Hylton has begun facilitating a Young Men's Discussion Group that has allowed teens to discuss a variety of topics. Hylton talked to the young men about personal growth, social issues, and current events. As they talk, the conversations help the young men open up and share their thoughts with others in the group. The comradery that the sharing created helped the group find some commonalities and new friendships. The young men are looking forward to the next session!
- Ninja Storm Tournament: The teens enjoy playing video games together and sometimes it can be competitive. We like to encourage the youth to participate in tournaments because there is an element of structure that the teens can benefit from. The use of a bracket system helps the youth organize and problem solve various situations that might arise in game. Tournaments are a great tool that can be used to conquer social anxiety by making friends with others who enjoy competitive gaming.
- Bob Ross Paint along: Teens were transfixed as the soothing voice of Bob Ross walked them through creating a winter wonderland. A free video from YouTube played on the screen and the teens



attempted to recreate the scene that Bob was describing. Fun was had, but participants agreed no one quite completed the picture they set out to make. We decided that was the beauty of art!

- Jingle Bell Roc was one of the biggest Smash Bros tournaments ever held in Rochester. The 585Fighterz hosted the event in the KGA featuring 6 different games, 3 different versions of Smash Bros, and live streamed championship matches on the KGA stage. This event had nearly 80 participants. Liberatorators that participated in the event had an exciting time and learned many lessons from the top players in Rochester. Liberatorators and other teens were allowed to enter the tournament for free. They learned very quickly that they need more practice!
- 585Fighterz' monthly esports tournament continues to teach kids fundamentals of competitive gaming and rewards them. This month's event had engagement in all three tournaments even though kids were not familiar with each game. The teens competed in three different games for GameStop gift cards.
- The Comic Book Empowerment Program hosted another Hillside group this month as well as being a New York Library Banned Book contest participant. The Hillside group completed great projects that the kids were immensely proud of. We are awaiting word of the contest result for the comic book entry that explored the fight against banning books. Cooley Comics has also added another teen employee. They work on the fourth floor of the library, learning all about how to create comics.





- The November Comic Empowerment Group hosted a huge reveal event where Cooley Comics delivered the most recent batch of completed comics. The event included news coverage and an appearance from the RCSD superintendent. They were extremely proud of their work!



Anecdotes

- Central Library Liberator Victor won the Mario Kart World Tournament Playoffs in a sweep! He dominated all three tracks including winning the final track of the World Tournament by over 3 seconds. He placed 2nd in overall points. He should be considered the favorite to win the World tournament next year.
- Representatives from the ROC Paint Division stopped by to ask about partnering with the Teen Center to create a custom Mural in the Imagine You Lab. We are excited to get involved in this program and give Rochester Teens a chance to beautify the space for everyone!

Community Libraries

Patricia Uttaro reporting

November and December were months focused on keeping Branch Administration moving forward as staff departures and changes occurred. Deputy Director Melanie Lewis began her retirement the week after Thanksgiving, leaving Branch Administration operating with Area Coordinator Erin Clarke and Librarian Amy Discenza, under the general supervision of Director Uttaro. In December, Clarke departed to become head of the Arts & Literature Division at the Central Library and Arnett Branch manager Bruce Tehan stepped into the role of Area Coordinator in Branch Administration. Applications for the Deputy Director position were received in early December and interviews were conducted by incoming Library Director Clasper, Finance Director Hasselwander, MCLS Associate Director Smathers, Area Coordinator Tehan, and Youth Services Manager George Carter. There were several well-qualified individuals interviewed, with the position ultimately offered to a candidate who will start March 3.

Amy Discenza represented RPL at several community meetings, including:

- Meeting with Caitlin Farnung from the United Way regarding a kit-building project for community members in need that they're hoping to roll out in the summer of 2025. Farnung is interested in partnering with libraries across the county on this initiative. Once funding for the project is secured, she will reach out to Discenza, who will connect her with the MCLS Adult, Children's, and Young Adult Librarians groups.
- Biweekly meeting, City of Rochester Opioid Team: Discenza provided the team with written feedback on the City of Rochester Opioid Website and worked with staff from the RIT Research Team to schedule site visits and interviews with the Branch Managers at the Lincoln and Monroe Branches in January. The visits are scheduled for January 16 (Lincoln) and 23 (Monroe) at 10:00 a.m.
- City of Rochester Children's Savings Account Community Engagement Committee: There have been over 250 responses to the Children's Savings Account Parent Survey. Angela Rollins and Madelaine Britt are in the process of writing the Children's Savings Account Implementation Plan and will send out a draft by the end of the year. They're also 1) developing an Inter-Municipal Agreement between the Rochester City School District and the City of Rochester to make it possible to automatically enroll RCSD kindergartners into the program and 2) developing a Request for Proposals to select a non-profit program administrator. The whole advisory group will get together in early 2026 for an event celebrating the release of the final plan.
- Mobile Library Updates: Coordinated with City Equipment Services staff to schedule two classes of CORLEO Driver Training prior to the RPL GO! ribbon cutting on December 19; worked with Dennis Williams (Lyell) to create a training video illustrating how to operate the vehicle's lift, awning, and

straps to secure van contents; created a webpage and online request form for RPL GO!; assembled a list of best practices and binder of important documents to keep in the vehicle; compiled photos and bookmobile history for display at the ribbon cutting; transported and staged the mobile library for the ribbon cutting; transported the technology carts to LAS.

Anecdotes

- In December, the City of Rochester hosted a job fair at City Hall for participants in the first cohort of the City's Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot project. Amy Discenza and a dedicated team of branch library staff worked at the event, distributing books and library information, and chatting with participants about their experience working at the library. Thanks to George Carter (Sully), Jeanie Coley (Monroe), Natasa Prelevic (Lyell), Cormel Sirmons (Lincoln), Victoria Velasquez (Lincoln), and Lillian Villaronga (Douglass) for taking time out of their weekends to work on this special event. We all appreciated the stunning decorations at City Hall.
- On December 16, Mayor Malik Evans, Senator Jeremy Cooney, parent leader Kearstin Piper Brown, and the family of longtime RPL bookmobile operator LeRoy Cox, joined RPL staff and community members at the Lyell Branch for a ribbon-cutting ceremony launching RPL GO!, the Rochester Public Library's new mobile library. Many RPL staff members helped make the event a success, including Frank Russo and Mike Miller from Maintenance, Maren Kyle from the MCLS Outreach Department, Chelsea Arnold from the Central Library's Children's Center, and the entire team at the Lyell Branch (Dennis Williams, Kifa Hendrix, Artemis Markakis, Danielle Catlin, Manju Sharma, Natasa Prelevic, Jamie Ahmed, and Barak Nitzan). Now let's get rolling.
- Retirement: On January 3, Cherrin Arnold retired after nearly 36 years of outstanding service at the Monroe Branch. Cherrin (on the right), pictured with Monroe Branch Manager Mary Clare, is cherished by both library visitors and staff for her kindness and dedication to public service. She's also kept the Monroe Branch looking good with her creative window box designs. Congratulations on your retirement, Cherrin! We'll see you on the other side of the circulation desk.



- Stand Out Service: April McCloud (substitute librarian), Victoria Velasquez (clerk bilingual/Lincoln Branch), Diane Hummell (clerk/Charlotte Branch), and Donna Owen (clerk/Charlotte) were recently recognized by library patrons for their outstanding work in the branches.
 - *"April McCloud went above and beyond to help me with what I was looking for—even when my one-year-old made a mess, she assured me that it was ok. She made my visit easy and fun."*
 - *"Victoria Velasquez always greets me and my children with a smile and loves my baby. We love feeling welcome and as though we belong in the cold and uncertain world we are living in today. Thank you!"*
 - *"For over 30 years, Diane Hummell, Donna Owen, and the rest of the staff at Charlotte have given excellent service, a great selection of resources, and special events. I've been a patron for over 60 years. Charlotte is truly a special 'friend.' Thanks!"*

Arnett Branch Library, Bruce Tehan & Nancy Cholewa reporting

Programs

- Arnett's December programming focused on embracing the change of seasons and the many holidays that come along with it. The month started with a Winter Holidays Party that included a performance by the Nate Rawls Community Jazz Band, along with games and activities for the youth. Prudence Anderson-Leusch hosted weekly children's craft sessions that focused on winter fun, such as building snowmen, reindeer, and suncatchers. In teen services, programming also focused on the season and gift-giving. Teens were encouraged to create gifts, including ornaments, decorative baskets, and greeting cards. A pop-up program to make paper snowflakes was also available for teens, as well as a taste test comparing chocolate mint items. Arnett staff also coordinated with the community around a caroling and tree lighting evening, and a tree decorating and story time program sharing holiday stories with friends from Dr. David & Ruth Anderson Academy School No. 16.



Community Outreach/Meetings

- Bruce Tehan attended the 19th Ward Association's Annual Convention. At the event, a beautiful display honoring recently deceased friends, neighbors, and volunteers from the 19th Ward debuted. Afterward, the creators requested that the tribute be displayed at the Arnett Branch Library, and Tehan was happy to accommodate. Many visitors have come to view the memorial and appreciate that it has found a home at the library.



- On Arnett's closed-to-the-public day, staff members toured the new Teen Empowerment headquarters on Genesee Street. During the visit, library personnel met with the staff there to gain insights into the organization's operations and goals and to brainstorm and discuss opportunities for mutual support. The remainder of the day was spent working on various projects around the library, including organizing areas, deep cleaning, and catching up on routine library work.

Anecdotes/Other

Arnett staff greatly appreciate the support, kind words, and actions of the Rochester Public Library community regarding an incident that occurred at the branch in late November.

Charlotte Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

- Maria Poinan presented a lecture on the history of 90 St. John's Park, exploring the site's evolution from convent to American Legion Post. This program was part of Charlotte's popular First Thursday local history series.
- The Food for Thought book club discussed—and universally enjoyed—*The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni and *The Door-to-Door Bookstore* by Carsten Henn. Participants met via Zoom to share their thoughts on the titles and other books they've recently enjoyed.
- Young patrons enjoyed a *Stone Soup* retelling with Jennifer Cherelin.
- Cherelin and a team of eight volunteers fed 143 families and made donations to two church blessing boxes through the branch's food distribution program. Produce was secured from vendors at the Rochester Public Market.



Anecdotes/Other

- Cathy Kyle joined the team at Charlotte in November as branch manager.
- Charlotte staff pitched in to help move the collection out of the story time room to facilitate ceiling repairs. Sylvia Griffin was especially helpful throughout the project and took extra care arranging items in a temporary location. The story time and hallway ceilings have since been repaired.

Douglass Community Library, Evanna DiSalvo reporting

Programs

- In November, the staff at Douglass organized a food drive to benefit Richard's House, a Veterans Outreach Center residential program that serves unhoused male veterans. The facility can accommodate up to 54 residents in a home-like environment, where they receive case management as the first step toward making positive lifestyle changes.

- The popular Seneca Park Zoo Safari Storytime returned in December with the theme “seasons.”
- Young patrons gathered to battle, trade, and discuss Pokémon cards at Isaac Lewis's Pokémon Hangout program. This event has grown in popularity with each presentation, resulting in a doubled door count on Pokémon Hangout Saturdays.
- Families had fun making beaded wreaths and candy cane ornaments for their Christmas trees. A few of the festive creations were hung on the Douglass tree for all to enjoy.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Jennifer Dupre visited classrooms at Anna Murray Douglass Academy School No. 12 and Generations Daycare St. John's/Highland campus.
- Dupre met with the school-age coordinator at Rochester Childfirst Network to plan programming for school breaks.
- Lewis visited classrooms at Anna Murray Douglass Academy School No. 12 and spoke with several teachers about bringing classes to Douglass for library instruction.

Anecdotes/Other

- After seeing a post in a neighborhood Facebook group from a mother concerned about giving her daughters a good Christmas, Douglass staff decided to "adopt" the family. The mother's requests were simple, allowing staff to give more than she had asked for. They included gift cards, stocking stuffers, wrapping supplies, and even gifts for the girls to give to their mom. The mother followed up to say: *"Thank you to everyone who was involved with adopting my family for Christmas. We are truly so grateful, and the girls were so happy to see the gifts under the Christmas tree."*
- Douglass staff used their fall training day to visit the other nine branches. It was a very full day, but staff felt the time was well spent; it was informative to see the physical locations, tour the branches, and put faces to names. The experience will help the team provide better customer service—now, when referring patrons to other branches, staff can share information about things like parking, special collections like vinyl record albums, and available spaces for meetings. One fun thing—it was discovered that the OPEN sign at Douglass can be set to flash like the sign at Sully! A bonus to making a full day of it was enjoying lunch together at Pizza Hut.



- Room 138, the space shared with School No. 12, is still not available for library use and is impacting Douglass's programming. It was discovered there had been a major communication breakdown, and the project manager thought the work was complete. As of this report's writing, the walls by the door still need to be painted and the floor in front still needs to be repaired. The hole in the floor is the biggest obstacle to using the space, as it is a safety concern. In addition, the school has had problems with the swipe entry to the room; the library has not yet received passes to test whether they work.

Lincoln Branch Library, Sarah Lehman reporting

Programs

- Young patrons enjoyed decorating the Toy Library with colorful paper chains, participating in a 3D scavenger hunt, and completing holiday-themed word searches at Lincoln's Fall into the Holidays Extravaganza.
- At Lincoln's annual gingerbread house event, children and families had a fun time creating and decorating a variety of gingerbread designs, ranging from miniature houses to tall towers and cozy cabins. Attendees also enjoyed "assessing building materials" (candy) for "quality control purposes" (eating candy not suitable for construction purposes).
- Winter break might have gotten warm, but children still enjoyed making Snowman Puppets inside! Patrons got creative dressing the puppets in a variety of colorful and cozy winter gear such as hats, vests, and scarves.
- Vera Haygood hosted a sculpture workshop for teens. Participants created their own masterpieces using various wood shapes, sandpaper, quick-drying adhesive, and paint.
- Haygood also led a guided painting activity for teens, who enjoyed a wonderful ambiance filled with friends, fellowship, and refreshments.
- Local artist Ingrid Phillips held a public display of her artwork, "Amazing Wilkins Street," at the Lincoln Branch in early November. Ms. Phillips was on site to discuss her work and creative process with library visitors.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Griffin Van Ostrand visited Wilson Commencement for a story time and craft session. The kids enjoyed making their own keychains and had many questions. As Van Ostrand was leaving, two of the children approached and expressed their gratitude for the visit.
- Van Ostrand presented the graphic novel genre for the Best Book of 2024 list at the December Children's Services meeting.
- Haygood took a group of teens to see the theater production of *A Christmas Carol* at Geva. They really enjoyed it and haven't stopped talking about the experience and the talent of the actors and actresses.
- Sarah Lehman attended a webinar on 'Period Poverty'—a significant issue for all populations but especially relevant for public libraries and the



Lincoln Branch. Lehman has been working with facilities to order equipment and supplies to provide sanitary napkins free of charge in public bathrooms at the branch.

Anecdotes/Other

- During a recent visit from RocDogs, one young patron demonstrated remarkable courage by confronting her fear of large dogs. While she did not pet the dog, she bravely stayed in the same room and asked questions, which helped her learn more about dog etiquette.
- Haygood collaborated with the Youth Development Specialist at Metro Council for Teen Potential, Baden Street Settlement of Rochester, Inc. to continue sharing information with teens about Sexual Risk Avoidance Education.

Lyell Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

- Kids created colorful works of art using crayons and watercolor paints.
- Teens enjoyed refreshments and played Apples to Apples during tabletop games week.
- Teens expressed gratitude this Thanksgiving season by crafting pumpkin pie spinners of thanks. In December, they decorated DIY wooden hand-shaped note holders.
- Staff from the Monroe County Improving Addiction Coordination Team tabled at Lyell, distributing Naloxone and training library visitors.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Artemis Markakis led technology training sessions for seniors at the Charles Settlement House.
- Markakis also met with staff from Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York to discuss 2025 collaborations.
- Manju Sharma met with Lina Gosden of the World Book Review for Nonfiction to develop the library's collection.
- On Lyell's closed-to-the-public day, staff received training on MyWayfinder, a resource that will help connect patrons with community resources. Afterward, they visited the Memorial Art Gallery, to explore fascinating works of art and learn about their history, techniques, and cultural significance.

Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran reporting

Programs

- Staff from Rochester General Hospital generously donated over 30 gifts for young patrons. The children and teens were thrilled with their gifts, which included a variety of items such as art supplies, a baby

doll, board games, a glow-in-the-dark rock painting kit, a dinosaur track, a bracelet-making kit, a desktop air hockey game, a mermaid terrarium, and Hot Wheels trucks and cars. Fatima, one of Maplewood's youngest visitors, started singing "Happy Birthday" when she saw all the presents. She received a baby doll, which she proudly showed around the library, particularly enjoying the doll's socks. The Maplewood team is incredibly grateful to the staff at Rochester General Hospital for their generosity and continued support.

- To provide more activities for young patrons, the staff at Maplewood introduced a snack time activity plan. Using a projector, children participate in various games such as word searches, hidden picture games, Sudoku, and Hangman during snack time. This is the only occasion when all the children gather in one area and are not actively engaged in homework or reading. Due to the limited programming space at the temporary site, activities that can be done anywhere—like Uno and Skip-Bo—have become the norm.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Mark Hafer attended a city meeting with local organizations focused on encouraging children to spend more time in nature. During the meeting, he met Frank, a farmer who works at the Foodlink farm located on Lexington Avenue. This coming spring, the library looks forward to planting vegetables with neighbors.
- Johanna Buran attended the Maplewood Neighborhood Association meeting. Mark Hafer, Kayla Lappino, and Tony Monahan represented the Maplewood Community Library at the Monroe County Library System children's, young adult, and adult services meetings.



Anecdotes/Other

- Maplewood staff helped a 75-year-old patron set up her first email address and build a resume so that she could apply for a caretaking position. She returned to let staff know that she'd got the job and was grateful for their assistance.
- Staff helped a patron from Tanzania apply for childcare assistance so that she and her spouse can continue to work full-time. The patron brought along a neighbor who speaks both Kiswahili and English to assist with translation.
- Brian DiNitto worked with a woman from Afghanistan to improve her conversation and listening skills. He developed worksheets featuring basic questions she could answer about her home, such as, "What color is the rug in your living room?" and practiced asking her these questions. She, in turn, wrote out her answers and asked the questions back to him. As a result, the patron felt more confident, leaving with improved conversation skills and a list of English questions she can use in future conversations with others.
- DiNitto notarized a document for a non-English-speaking patron using a certified over-the-phone translator and assistance from Mary's Place staff.
- Darla, a Meal Plan Coordinator from Foodlink, recently visited the library. As she was leaving, one of Maplewood's youngest patrons walked in, waved at Darla, and greeted her. Darla was thrilled to see how comfortable young visitors feel at the library.

Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg reporting

Programs

- The Monroe Branch's 110th anniversary party was a tremendous success. Over 150 people attended the event, enjoying pizza and cake, music, scavenger hunts on both floors, trivia, and a drawing class. Talented staff members wore many hats during the event: Ian Downey hosted trivia and played the cello, Joe Bushen entertained on the electric keyboard, and Teresa Filo, inspired by a collaboration with the Eastman Museum, set up a station to create nature patterns from pinecones, leaves, and dried flowers.
- Students from Genesee Community Charter School made their monthly visit to the library. Twenty-six sixth graders explored and checked out materials from the young adult section and the children's room.
- Theresa Filo rolled out a new video game program for teens in December.
- Compeer Rochester hosted a special, all-ages holiday craft program at Monroe.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Chris Price delivered books to a resident at Cobbs Hill Manor who, due to inclement weather, was unable to get to the library to pick up his holds. The individual is a Monroe regular; he enjoys the social interaction that the library affords.
- Mary Clare Scheg and Filo are collaborating with the Center for Youth to set up a tutoring program for program participants who need extra help with math and English.

Anecdotes/Other

- Thanks to ROC Made with Love, Monroe has a supply of cozy hats and scarves available for community members in need. The handmade goods are bagged and hung along the circulation desk for easy access.
- In keeping with the season, patrons recently completed a puzzle featuring *It's a Wonderful Life*.



Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Lori Frankunas reporting

Programs

- Alexandra Haehn read aloud *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert. The children joined in to help her read the story, taking turns with each page. Afterward, they used leaves to create their own leaf person or animal. Attendees had fun adding googly eyes, pom-poms, and feathers to their creations.



- Young patrons created holiday cards with personalized greetings for seniors at River Edge Manor.
- Katy Rebholz hosted representatives from the Seneca Art and Culture Center at Ganondagan for an all-ages program, Ganondagan Presents: The Storytellers Circle. The presenters shared stories and songs from the Seneca people and discussed their history, present, and culture with the participants.
- Rebholz partnered with Metro Council for Teen Potential to craft cozy fleece scarves for community members in need. Participants proudly created nine beautiful scarves to donate.
- Heather Ahearn's Audiobooks and Art group made gratitude journals while listening to selections from *The Best Short Stories of 2024*.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Haehn represented the Phillis Wheatley Community Library at the Charles T. Lunsford School No. 19 Snuggle Up and Read Program, registering participants for library cards and giving away books. Many parents were interested in learning more about the programs the library has to offer.
- The Phillis Wheatley Library was closed to the public on December 16 for staff training. Staff built a Harry Potter village using donated Lego kits, which will be displayed in the library. While assembling the kits, staff enjoyed getting to know each other better. This activity was a successful and productive team-building exercise.

Anecdotes/Other

- Miss Debra takes Sebastian and Joel to the library for help with their homework and to enjoy some social time after school. She often tells Haehn how much she appreciates the library for supporting the children and teens. With the assistance he receives, Sebastian has been improving; he can now write his full name and count to ten.
- A woman and her son visited the library to sign up for programs in January. The child thoroughly enjoyed the experience and was heard saying, "*I really like this library! It's nice here!*" He also expressed his gratitude by saying, "*Thank you for bringing me, Mom!*"
- Mohamed enjoys working on puzzles. He has learned to do them on his own, with some help from Mr. Steve or Haehn. The Buzz Lightyear puzzle was the first one he completed entirely by himself. Working on puzzles has helped him improve his motor skills and identify colors and shapes.



Sully Branch Library, Maria Heeks-Heinlein reporting

Programs

- December, Sully, and gingerbread houses go hand in hand. Sully's annual gingerbread house program was a resounding success. One attendee shared that she and her child had just moved to the area from Florida and were looking for something fun to do together when they learned about the program. They said that they had such a fun time they were already planning to return next year.
- George Carter led an illuminating light art craft program for young patrons. The program was fun and educational, encouraging youth to explore the properties of light through their senses. It promoted creativity and fostered critical thinking about color and design while offering a hands-on approach to understanding concepts related to science, art, and technology. By manipulating light sources and materials, participants were able to actively "play" with light, allowing them to learn about its behavior and visual effects.



- Carter also hosted a Kwanzaa program in December. Safe to Be Smart participants learned why families and communities come together during the week of Kwanzaa to share a feast, honor the ancestors, affirm the bonds between them, and celebrate African and African American culture.



- Jacob Bigelow hosted a meeting of the Rochester Queer Comics Club, a part of the Rochester Rainbow Union. The meeting is a gathering of queer comic, fandom, and nerd culture fans, gathering in a safe and inclusive space to talk about their interests. This meeting featured visiting artist Nathaniel Hubble, a senior effects animator in the video game industry, who has worked on popular games like Guild Wars 2 and was an RIT alum.

Community Outreach/Meeting/Training

- Maria Heeks-Heinlein attended a safety meeting at the Ryan Complex to discuss shared security issues among the three entities that occupy the campus: the Sully Library, John James Audubon School No. 33, and the Thomas Ryan Community Center.
- On Sully's closed-to-the-public day, Erin Clarke met with the team to answer questions. Afterward, staff created a new sitting area in the Children's section and an additional storage space in the back room. They are grateful to Mike Miller from the Maintenance Department for his help with these projects. Sully staff worked hard to clean up after these projects and the book sale; it was a productive day.

Anecdotes/Other

- A patron came in to pick up some holds and expressed gratitude for all the books available at the library. She also mentioned that as a retiree, she appreciates the social aspect of a trip to the Sully Branch. She always receives a friendly smile and a cheerful hello from the staff.
- A young patron visited the library's holiday book sale and selected several titles to take home. The following week, the child's aunt stopped in to let staff know how much the little girl loved the books she chose, sharing that she took them to church to show them off.

Winton Branch Library, Kathy Wolf reporting

Programs

- John Bliss has been bringing his classes to the Winton Branch Library for many years, and this year was no different. The fifth graders walked half a mile from Frank Fowler Dow School No. 52. Some of them received library cards for the first time, while others had their cards reinstated. The students enjoyed listening to Kathy Wolf read a few stories, and they were given a tour of the library and some time to select materials to take home. After their visit, they headed to Salvatore's on Main Street for lunch before returning to school. We hope the kids had as much fun as the staff at Winton did!



- For the November meeting of Comic Club, Winton tweens read *Into the Heartlands: A Black Panther Comic*. The book was well received by participants, who have made their preference for Marvel over DC comics clear. After an animated discussion about superheroes, snacks, and *Marley and Me*, of all things, tweens engaged in an intense game of Fictionary in which players were challenged to draw specific items based on a point system. Everyone had a wonderful time drawing and guessing.
- The fall session of Winton Writers Group, facilitated by Jen Case, was wrapped up in December. On the survey, several participants commented that the group provided a safe space to share their writing and that they enjoyed being with other writers. One person said, *"I enjoyed it very much, learned a lot...it was so nice to be in the company of other writers. Love having Jen Case as an instructor. She has good class plans...She is caring and supportive and validates and respects students."* Besides supporting literacy and encouraging writers, the writing programs at Winton nurture a community of supportive friends from diverse backgrounds.

Community Outreach/Meeting/Training

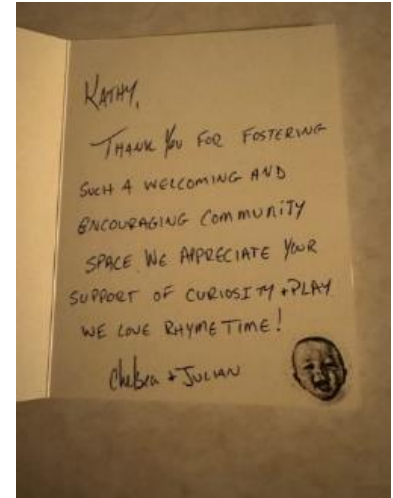
- Smith attended the New York Library Association Annual Conference for the first time and was excited to explore various programs focused on teen services. One standout program, "Dinosaur Pizza: Learning Librarianship from Kids," was particularly insightful as it gave her new ideas about how to build programs around the interests of children and teens. Smith was impressed to learn how the speaker built a teen program called "Reverse Virtual Reality," a street fighter-inspired martial arts program that embraced her teen patrons' love of video games and the literacy skills that go with them rather than discouraging them in favor of traditional book reading. This program made the teens feel seen and celebrated within their library space, something Smith is eager to try to implement in her own work as a Youth Services Librarian. Networking with librarians from across New York State provided Smith with new ideas and boosted her confidence in her library's impact on the community. She also discovered a creative take-and-make project for 2025's colorful summer reading theme.
- Natalie Brennan was thrilled to attend this year's annual NYLA Conference and feels extremely grateful for the opportunity. Having worked as a clerk at the Winton Branch Library for just over a year, she was amazed that she could participate in such a significant event. Initially, she worried that her passion for the library might be local or fleeting. However, attending the NYLA Conference reinforced her love for the profession and the community of library professionals. One concrete outcome of Brennan's conference experience is her decision to return to school to pursue a master's in library science.

Anecdotes/Other

- Students from East High School are using the Tween area of the Winton Branch Library as an exhibition space for their photography. The artwork is impressive and complements the space beautifully.
- A caller inquired about the number of staff at the Winton Branch and that evening, her intentions became clear. A young woman arrived at the circulation desk with a bag of carefully wrapped soaps, hand lotion, lip balms, and holiday candies. The card read: *"Dear Winton staff, I moved to Rochester two years ago, and the Winton Branch library was my first 'locals' joint. Thank you for building warm community and good spirits."*



- A patron called the library on a Saturday morning asking for a novel that she would stop by to pick up. *"I'd planned to be in Nepal right now, trekking to the Tibetan Border, but because of my back, I've been laid up for almost a year,"* she told Mary Fraser. *"Being able to read library books has gotten me through these months."* Fraser told her that Winton offers curbside service, but the patron responded that she wanted to come into the library, *"I haven't seen people all day."*
- Wolf received a lovely note from one of the Rhyme Time families along with a sticker of their smiling baby. She displays the sticker on her desk for those times when she needs a smile!
- Winton Branch Library staff took advantage of their closed-to-the-public staff training day to work on some special projects. They kicked off the day with a productive staff meeting, and then each person worked on individual projects that included the creation of a space for a "Library of Things" display in a prominent spot where patrons will be able to discover the external optical drives, binoculars, game consoles and other unexpected items that are available for them to check out with their library card. Other projects included the repotting of overgrown plants, weeding the Russian Collection, and reorganizing the early literacy play area.



***Tummonds Fund* Annual Grant Report for:**
Rochester Public Library, 115 South Ave. Rochester, NY 14604

1. Amount of *Tummonds Fund* grant in preceding year: \$ **88,394.13**
2. Amount of grant NOT used for the purchase of circulating books & materials in preceding year (if any): \$ **0.00**
3. Statement certifying the number and value of circulating books & materials purchased with grant money in preceding year:

In **2024**, the **Rochester Public Library** used its FFRPL *Tummonds Fund* grant to purchase **supplemental** circulating materials of **4,959** e-books and **1,002** audiobooks, at a cost equal to or exceeding \$88,394.13.

4. For the two preceding years, **total** funds budgeted for **materials**, as reported in the NYS Library Annual Report:

In 2024: **\$1,270,280**

In 2023: **\$1,246,938**

Briefly explain any variance greater than 10 percent:

5. Statement certifying your library is a tax supported public or association library and remains eligible to receive *Tummonds Fund* grants:

“Rochester Public Library is a tax supported public library and is eligible to receive FFRPL *Tummonds Fund* grants, which we agree will only be spent for **supplemental** circulating material. We further agree to abide by all terms & conditions of confidentiality, spending and reporting requirements as determined by the FFRPL *Tummonds Fund* Committee, in order to remain eligible for continued grants.”

Approved by the Rochester Public Library Board of Directors:

Donna P. Benjamin, Board President, Rochester Public Library _____ (signature)

Patricia Uttaro, Director, Rochester Public Library _____ (signature)

FFRPL Report to Board of Directors – December 2024

As of November 30, the statement balance of our primary investment account is \$14,349,307 and the balance of our account for the Tummonds Fund is \$17,376,163. The balance of the Working Capital Account is \$712,822.

The average yield for the working capital account is 4.93%. The average yield for the M&T sweep is 4.81%

The Tummonds Fund Committee's bi-annual financial overview meeting with Alesco Advisors occurred on October 30, 2024. FFRPL's new Investment Policy Statement was reviewed as well, and all information was favorably received.

Recent FY25 FFRPL expenditures for RPL:

- \$23,885 Children's literacy programs (including \$18,000 for books to give away)
- \$6,000 Pilot program for Patron Incident Tracking System
- \$2,975 Camera and streaming equipment for the Kusler-Cox Auditorium
- \$2,926 Laptops for Mobile Library
- \$2,730 Empire Passes for MCLS libraries
- \$5,716 RRLC (balance of director search consultation fee and job posting expenses)

Special Projects:

Borgus completed service on the Search Committee for the new RPL/MCLS Director. FFRPL is excited to work with Emily Clasper in this role!

Thanks to those who contributed to **FFRPL's 2024 ROC the Day Challenge** on December 3rd. Collectively, from the 4 boards (FFRPL, RPL, MCLS, Reynolds) FFRPL received 24 board member gifts and pledges leading up to and on ROC the Day totaling \$6,400. The board member's support contributed almost 60% of the total raised! Some even gave a challenge gift and made another on ROC the Day! Thank you for being ambassadors and helping us spread the message too. With your help, an additional 60 donors contributed to this wonderful program.

As a result, FFRPL raised \$11,000 for Central Library's imagineYOU Comic Empowerment Program. This program is a groundbreaking initiative that combines storytelling and visual creativity to build self-confidence in local youth and identifying their own capabilities. This unique program uses AI technology to help teens and tweens to create personalized superhero stories, highlighting the positive aspects of each participant's life, providing a platform for self-expression, inspiration, and fostering empathy within the community. FFRPL now has additional funds to give to RPL to invite more youth to participate – the waiting list can be cleared!

An online donation page is available for future [gifts to the Comic Empowerment Program](#).

FFRPL is honored to be involved in the celebration of the **retirement of Patty Uttaro, Director of RPL/MCLS**. Patty has decided that she prefers that we do not hold a large event for her retirement. Therefore, FFRPL has made efforts to celebrate and thank Patty with a series of smaller events.

On the RPL Staff Day on October 25th FFRPL provided lunch in honor of Patty's retirement. Over 200 staff attended.

The Theme for Tuesday Topics this year will be "Patty's favorite things" to highlight library projects that are especially meaningful to Patty. (see more details below).

And lastly, at Patty's request, donations made in her honor will be designated to the **Harold Hacker Fund for the Advancement of Libraries**.

Harold Hacker was instrumental in creating the Monroe County Library System and he founded the OWWL Library System. He was Director of MCLS and the Rochester Public Library for 24 years. He also founded the Rochester Regional Library Council.

Both Harold Hacker and Patty Uttaro devoted their careers to expanding the scope and availability of library services.

Patty chose this Fund because it supports **innovative projects/programs at member libraries** of the Rochester Regional Library Council and throughout the MCLS and OWWL systems, as well as **professional development for staff** working in those member libraries.

\$2,936 has been donated to date, including a gift of \$2,500 from Donald Specht.

Thank you for your consideration in [honoring Patty Uttaro with a gift](#) in support of the continued advancement of our regional libraries!

Annual Campaign:

The FY24 Annual Campaign has generated a total of \$136,050 from 688 entered gifts as of the end of November (both restricted and unrestricted).

The holiday annual campaign letter arrived in homes November 18 on schedule. Specialized statements were included to create seven versions of the annual campaign letter to approach 6 identified segments of the donor database and one to address patrons. This mailing also included a test of letter differences to potential donors and a comparison of methods of acquisition. The potential donors are coming from the library card database and a purchased donor list obtained on our behalf by the mailhouse. The letter difference includes the above-mentioned annual campaign letter, and a one page \$10 ask letter.

In addition, a follow up letter is scheduled to reach donors on December 9 to remind them to make their donations before the end of the calendar year. This will be sent to current donors and recently lapsed donors. Each mailing also contains a Winter Programs brochure. Planned giving messaging is included in the brochure and on the gift slips to efficiently utilize resources.

Database Management:

Generated datafiles from the Exceed database, manipulated data for use by the mailhouse and coded all records for both the holiday annual campaign mailing and the follow-up mailing. Reviewed feedback from the mailhouse based on NCOA information and updated database.

Entered 593 gifts since September 14, and sent corresponding acknowledgement letters.

Grants/Major and/or Restricted Gifts:

\$4,194.55 grant received from Orrin T. Shapiro Memorial Foundation to annual campaign. This is the final contribution; the foundation is closing.

\$2,500 grant received from Farash Foundation restricted to Business Insight Center.

\$2,500 holiday donation received from Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP. Thank you to board director Steve Suozzi for nominating FFRPL to be one of 6 recipients this year!

Planned Giving:

Received \$68,909.73 from estate of Thomas C. Wheeler.

Received notification of final account of bequest of James R. Boehler. Signed and returned receipt and release for \$58,620.83. In previous gifts from James Boehler's estate, we received a collection of CDs, DVDs, and videos, \$2,000 to be used for subscriptions to the Buffalo news, and \$5,000 unrestricted.

Documented unrestricted planned gift from of \$315,000 (FFRPL is the beneficiary of TIAA & CREF accounts). Donor wishes to remain anonymous.

Book Sales (On-site and Online):

The net income from on-site and online book sales as of the end of November is \$7,184.

The Fall book sale continued into November as a bag sale to help remove the deaccessioned books from the library. The total sale proceeds for October and November were \$734.

The Season's Readings Sale that is being held from December 2 – 13 is underway and has a large variety of items.

Future planned book sales for FY25 are a Spring Sale: April 6-12 (National Library Week) and a Summer Sale - June 23-27

18 partner library contracts have been signed and returned: Brighton, Chili, East Rochester, Gates, Greece, Henrietta, Irondequoit, Macedon, Medina, Mendon, MCC, Parma, Rush, Seymour, Scottsville, Webster, The Strong, and Nazareth University.

Community Outreach:

Provided 5 boxes of books for Halloween at the Public Market; we were told this was very well received. This is the second year that we provided books for this wonderful community event.

Also provided 5 boxes of children's and teen books for Wheatley Library for a Halloween giveaway.

Provided books for the City of Rochester job fair on December 7th. Books on business were on display on the RPL Book Bike and offered for free to participants.

Provided approximately 75 children's books for Assemblymember Demond Meeks community meet with Santa.

Logistical Update: FFRPL has vacated Room #331 in the Rundel Library Building at the library's request. We have transitioned our sorting area into our pre-pricing and deaccessioning area. This is still a work in progress which we hope to have completed by January.

Volunteers:

FFRPL held a volunteer luncheon on November 21st to recognize and thank our 17 dedicated volunteers who gave approx. 2,661 hours of service this past fiscal year.

One of our volunteers is removing the hard covers from our recycled books so that we are able to recycle responsibly without transporting the books to Eco Park.

Programming & Marketing:

Legacy Programs

Books Sandwiched In Fall 2024 series presented 8 reviews:

- 9/10/24, review of "The Infernal Machine" – 47 people attended; 10 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 9/17/24, review of "Things That Go Bump in the Universe" – 24 people attended; 23 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 9/24/24, review of "Rebel Girl" – 18 people attended; 6 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 10/1/24, review of "BoyMom" – 24 people attended; 68 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 10/8/24, review of "Soil" – 24 people attended; 11 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 10/15/24, review of "The Briar Club" – 41 people attended; 23 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 10/22/24, review of "This is Why You Dream" – 58 people attended; 24 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.
- 10/29/24, review of "Pockets" – 29 people attended; 16 viewed the livestream video during the first 30 days it was posted.

***Tuesday Topics* Winter 2025: “A few of the Director’s favorite things”**

See ffrpl.org and look for flyer mailed with the November annual campaign letters.

- **January 7 - Patty Uttaro** will launch the series with a talk about Central Library’s signature juried ***Art of the Book & Paper*** exhibit. **Register**
- **January 14 - Tonia Burton**, Children’s Services Consultant for MCLS, will talk about the importance of **early literacy**. **Register**
- **January 21 - Jennifer Byrnes**, head of Central Library’s Business Insight Center and the project lead, will talk about the **Library’s role in the new county-wide digital equity initiative**. **Register**
- **January 28 - Shalis Worthy**, Central Library’s Historical Services Coordinator, will present ***“Viewing the Past in the Present: An Exploration of the Local History and Genealogy Division.”*** **Register**

Began logistics, promotion, and acceptance of submissions for **Sokol 2025 H.S. Literary Contest**. High School Students are invited to **register** online and then submit work via email.

FFRPL is excited to welcome Elijah Bader-Gregory to the committee (great-grandson of Eli and Mildred Sokol), who reached out to FFRPL asking to participate.

Library and FFRPL-supported Programs

Staff Day (see above)

Continued to support Central’s Program Team

- Continued to promote RPL and FFRPL sponsored **online Author Talks**
- Continued to promote and support MCLS Author Speaker Series, including event on October 8 at Penfield Public Library with Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Jonathan Eig (co-presented with **East Rochester Public Library**). The event was sponsored by Senator Samra Brouk, FFRPL, and Friends of Penfield Public Library.
- Borgus and Lusigan attended the **Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC) legislative breakfast** on Friday, November 15. Lusignan used info. and pictures for a FB post which had 594 views – tagged host Henrietta Public Library, RRLC, and our Sokol partner the Drake Memorial Library at SUNY Brockport (which was named 2024 Academic Library of the Year). Re-posted RRLC’s content.

Continued to support Central’s Exhibits Team

- Helped present and promote the run of ***Art of the Book & Paper***. Began planning for **Marionettes** (on view 12/7/25 – 3/25/25) and **Fairy Houses** (on view 4/3/25 – 6/27/25).

Library and FFRPL-supported program-related Marketing

- Helped promote the **Greater Rochester Youth Read with author Veera Hiranandani**; **Central’s Book Talk with Sidney Morrison** (Frederick Douglas: A Novel); **Central’s Staff Day**, **Rochester Children’s Book Festival at MCC** (FFRPL was a Presenting Sponsor); **Lyla in the Loop Family Game Night at Central Library**.
- Promoted FFRPL’s donation of books to a **Strong Pediatric office affiliated with Golisano Children’s Hospital**, the **Fall Book Sale**; **Bag Book Sale**; and **Season’s Readings Book Sale**; maintained ongoing publicity for online book sales.

- Promoted holidays/observances, including **Diwali, Thanksgiving, Mexican Day of the Dead** (Dia de los Muertos). Publicized Library closings; national holidays/observances.
- Cross promoted Library programs and resources across divisions.

General Fundraising: campaigns and events

- Integrated marketing messaging for the Annual Campaign theme into digital newsletters, FB, web site, email signatures, and event announcements.
- Created a comprehensive Marketing Plan and toolkit for ROC the Day (United Way's 24-hour giving day held on December 3). Created text as well as customized, AI-generated Comic-based graphics with diverse cultural/racial/ethnic/age representation. All collateral was tailored for Library Partner Chris Cooley/Cooley Creative, and also for use by all 4 Library Boards.
- Promoted planned giving for National Estate Planning Awareness Week.
- Planned end-of-calendar year messaging.
- Interviewed a library patron "success story" (suggested by the Tech. Center) for a future impact story.
- Created a new FFRPL pull-up banner.

Constant Contact eblasts (approx. 3,500 subscribers)

Sept. 19, *'Books Sandwiched In' reviews 'Rebel Girl' 9/24; author talk w/2024 Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Jonathan Eig 10/8 at Penfield Public Library – open rate: 46%.*

Sept. 27, *on raising boys ... studying bats ... buying books – open rate: 47%.*

Oct. 3, *BSI reviews 'Soil: the Story of a Black Mother's Garden'; FFRPL holds our Fall Book Sale; Greater Rochester Youth Read hosts Veera Hiranandani – open rate: 47%.*

Oct. 10, *Watch Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Jonathan Eig's Penfield talk on MLK, Jr.; attend BSI's review of Kate Quinn's new mystery; find good reads at FFRPL's Fall Book Sale! – open rate: 50%*

Oct. 17, *Find out WHY you dream; HOW to make a planned gift to FFRPL; + WHERE to get great book deals this Fall! – open rate: 50%*

Oct. 24, *a BOOK REVIEW for adults; a BOOK FESTIVAL for children; a LITERARY CONTEST for teens – open rate: 43%*

Oct. 31, *mark the Hindu New Year w/Diwali; attend the Rochester Children's Book Fest @MCC 11/2; get books for \$1/bag starting 11/4 @FFRPL's bag book sale – open rate: 39%*

Nov. 7, *book sale (\$1/bag); book arts; book reviews – open rate: 53%*

Nov. 14, *'Art of the Book & Paper' -- register to attend a special event and see the exhibit before it closes! Book sale (\$1/bag). Next up: a fundraiser for youth – open rate: 46%*

Nov. 21, *be a superhero for youth on 'ROC the Day'; hear stories of gems from the Smithsonian collection – open rate: 38%*

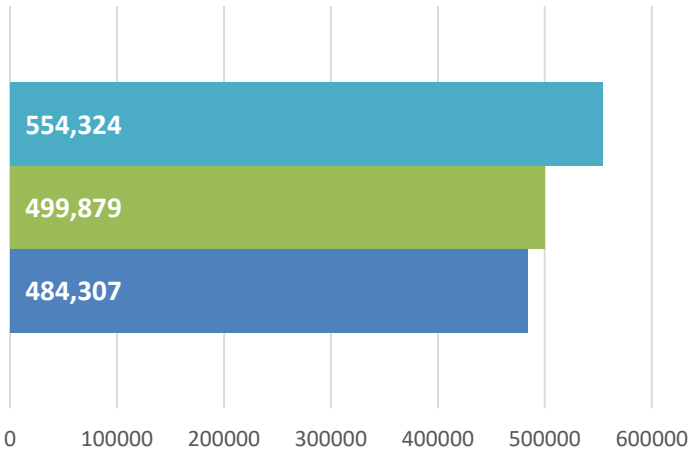
Nov. 26, *a note of thanks and a preview of our ROC the Day project – open rate: 41%*

Dec. 3, *Please help 'ROC the Day' for Central Library's imagineYOU Comic Empowerment Program – open rate: 39% Evening edition open rate also 39%*

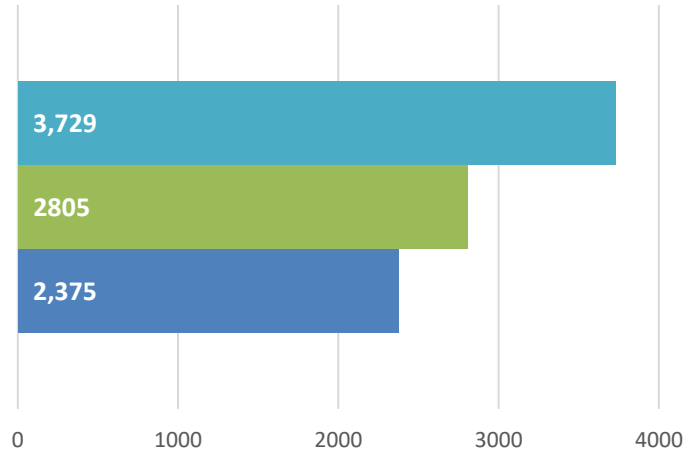
RPL Central Statistics YTD
Jan–Nov



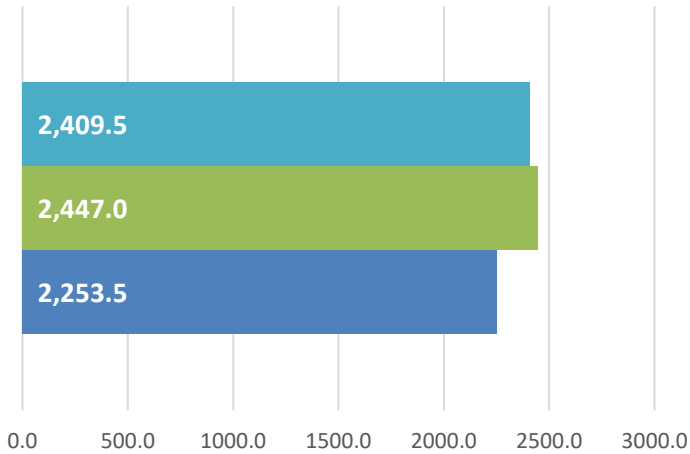
CIRCULATION



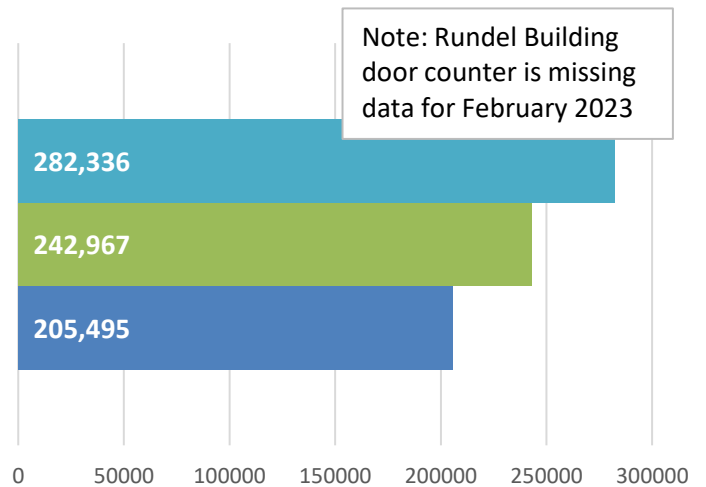
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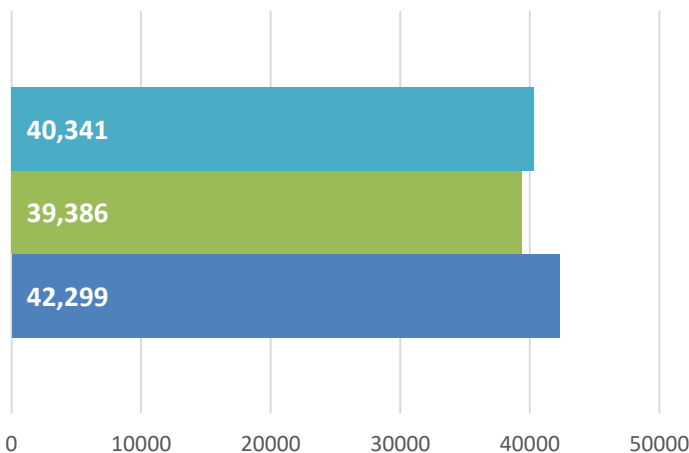
SERVICE HOURS



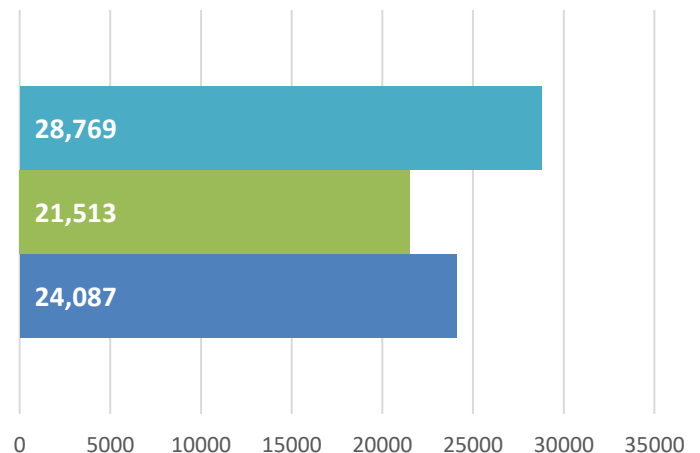
VISITS



REFERENCE QUESTIONS



NON-REFERENCE



RPL Central Statistics YTD

Jan–Nov



NOTARY

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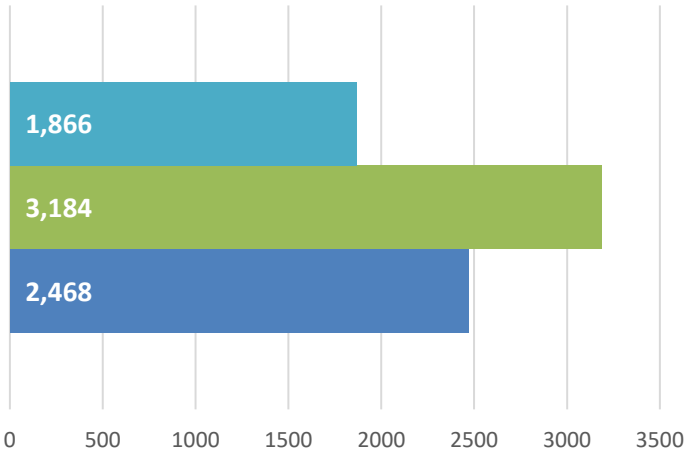
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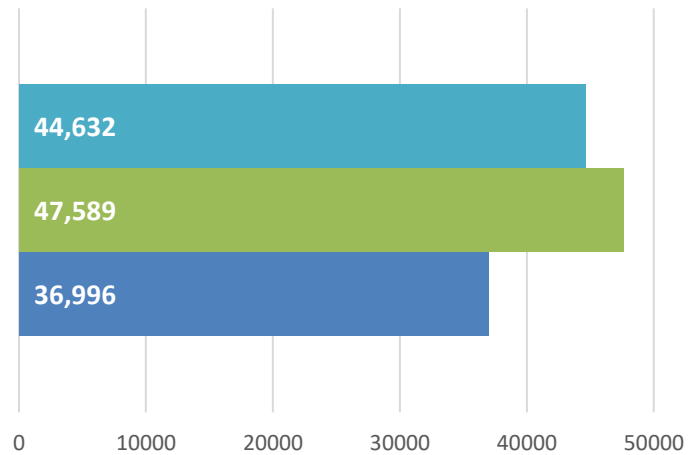
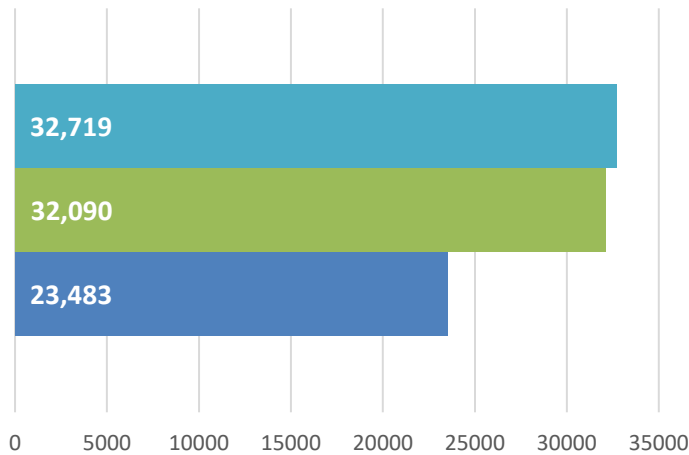
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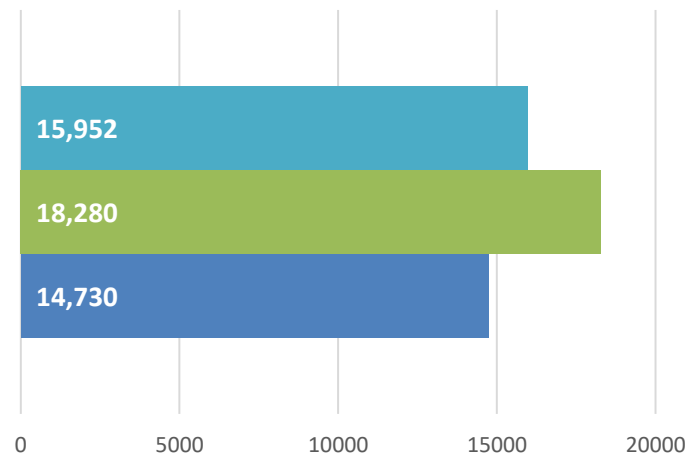
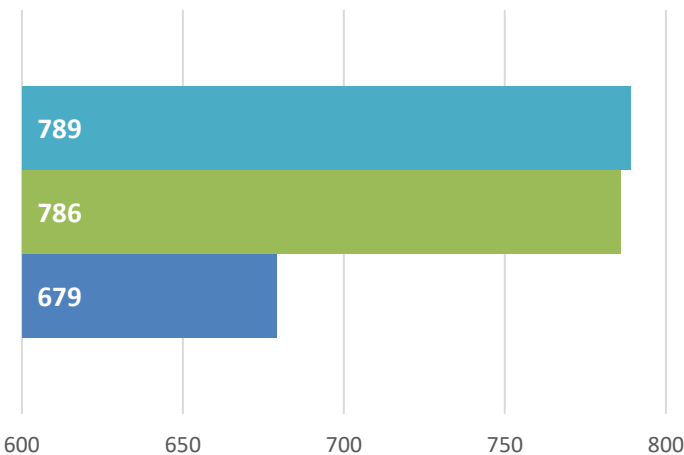
COMPUTER HOURS

WIFI USES



GROUP PROGRAMS

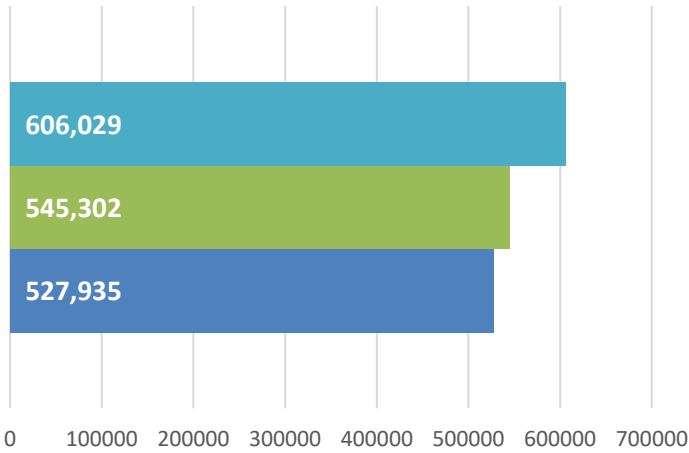
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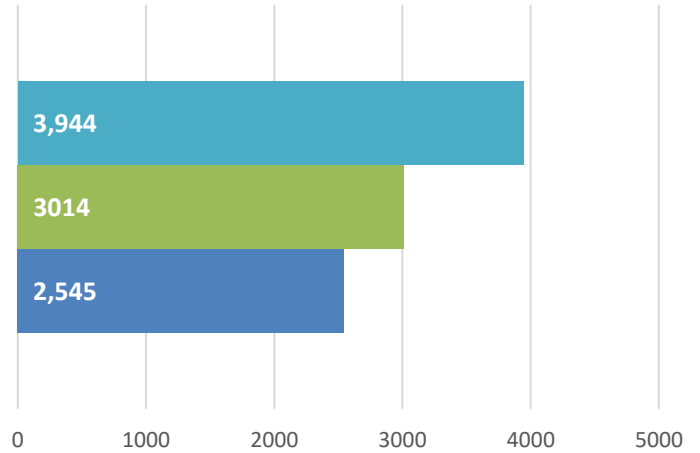
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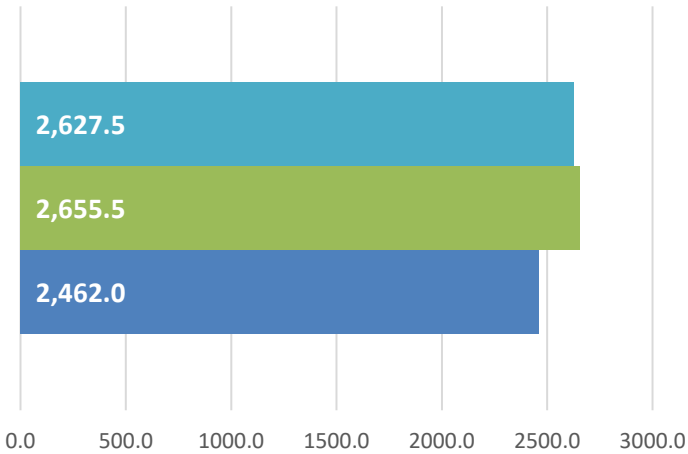
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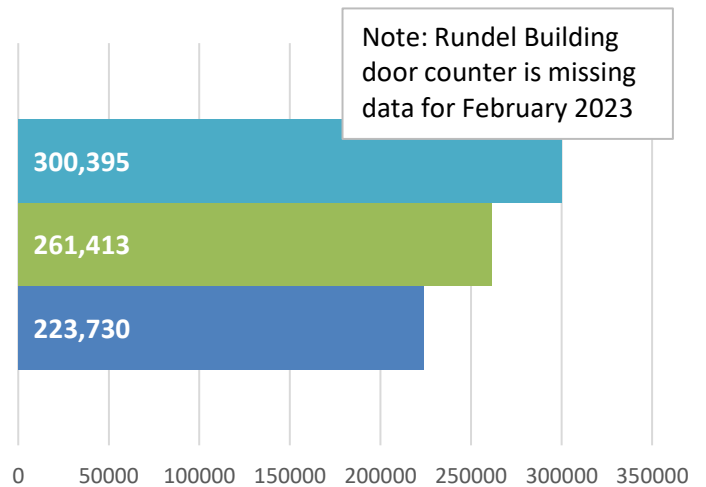
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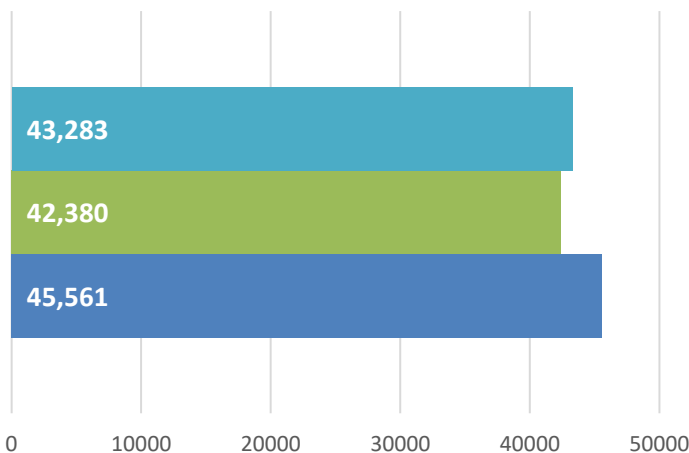
SERVICE HOURS



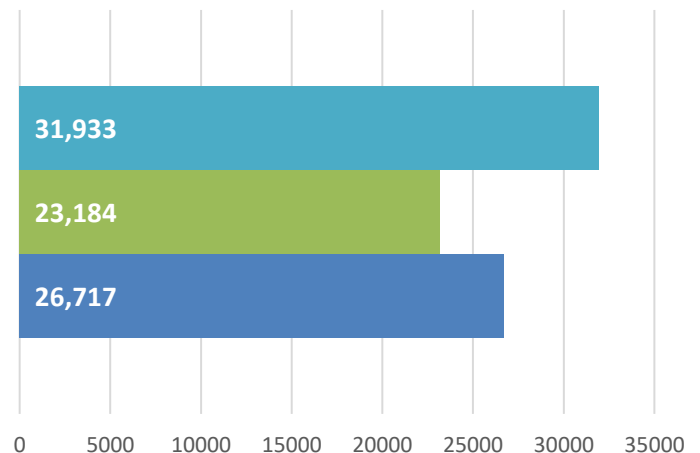
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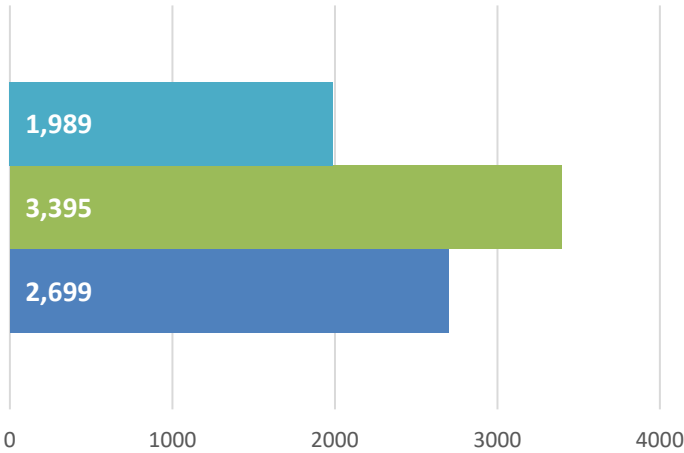
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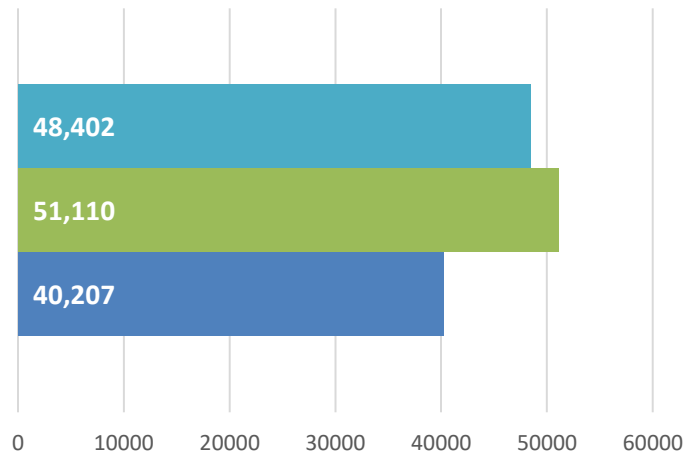
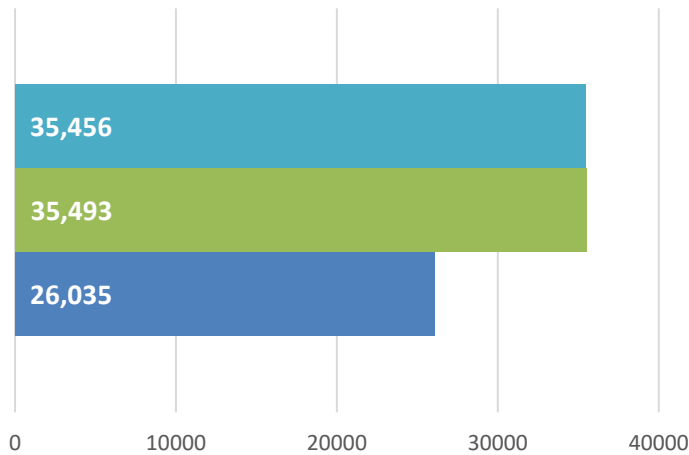
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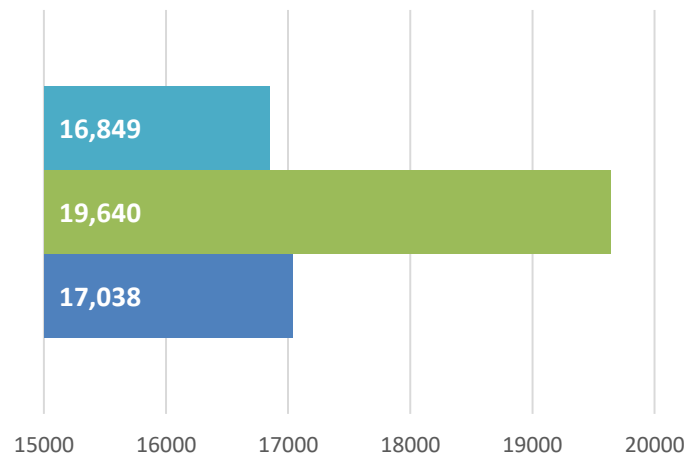
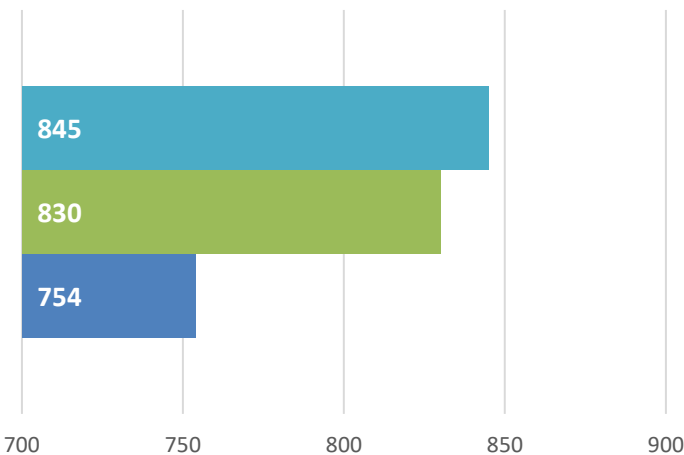
COMPUTER HOURS

WIFI USES



GROUP PROGRAMS

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



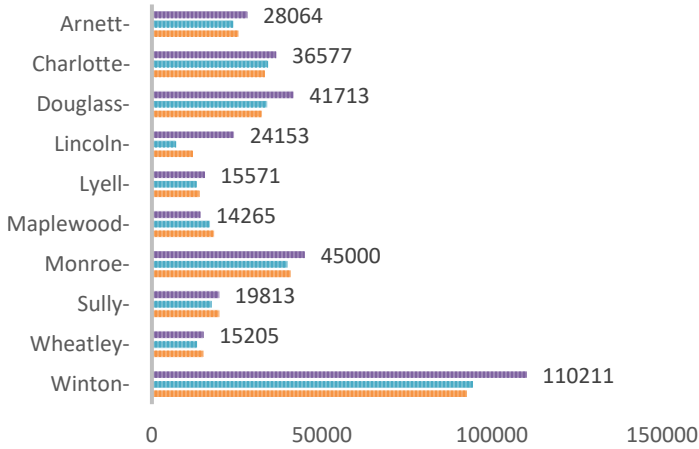
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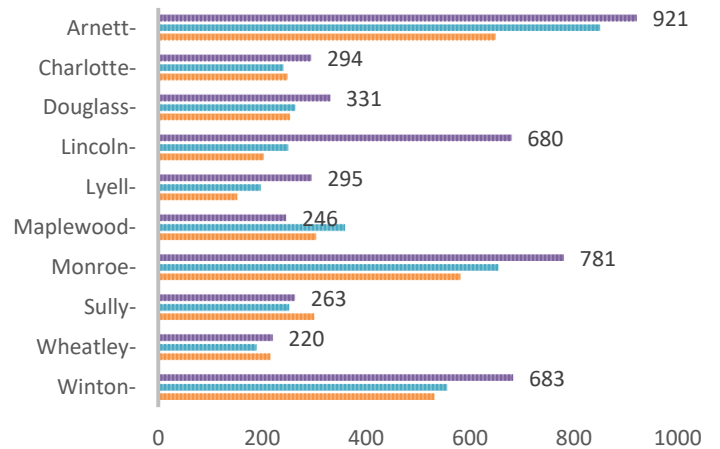
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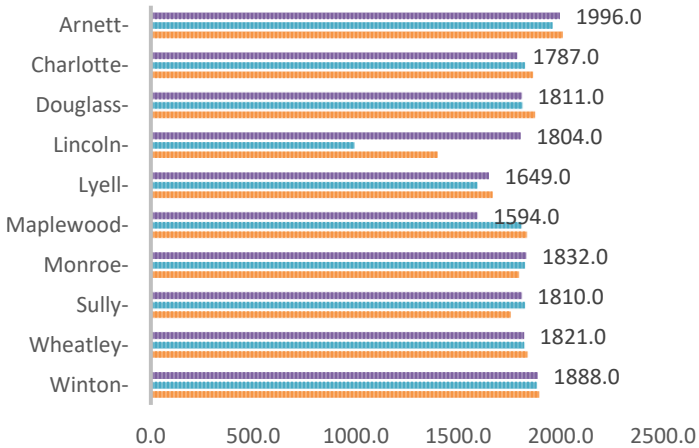
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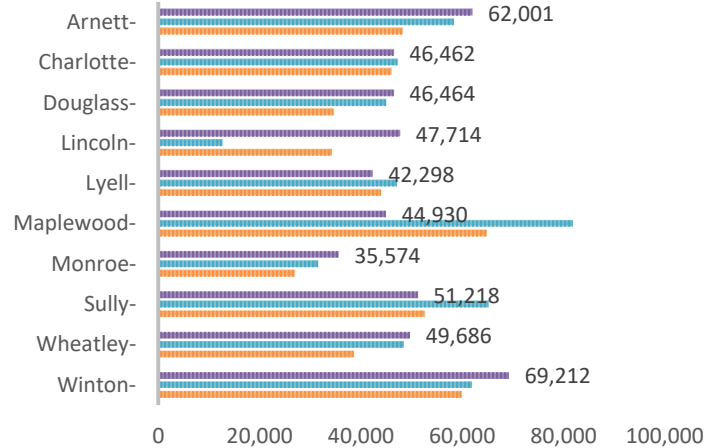
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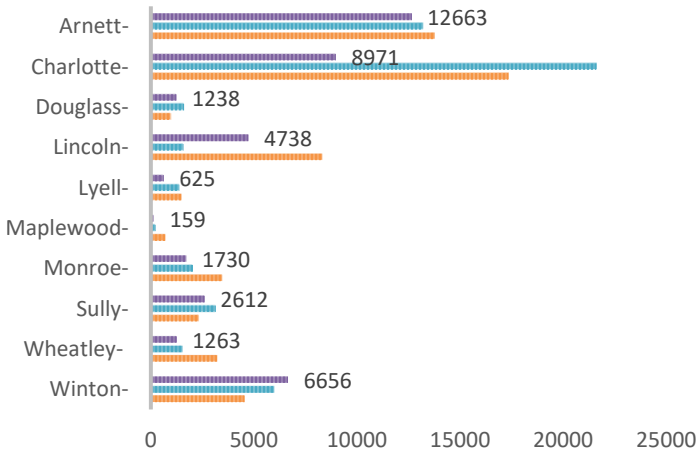
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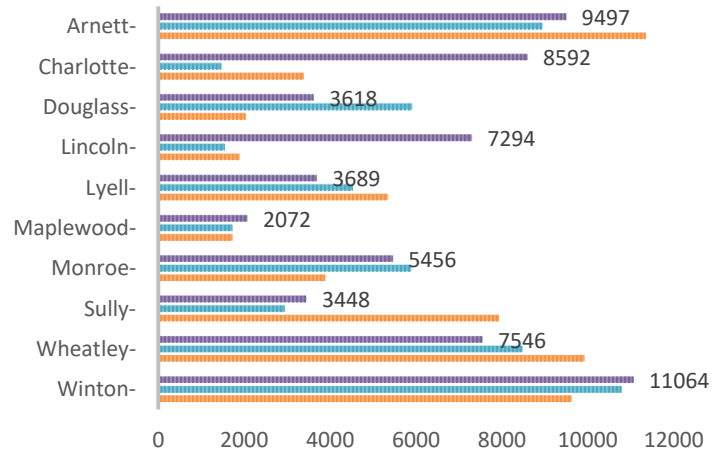
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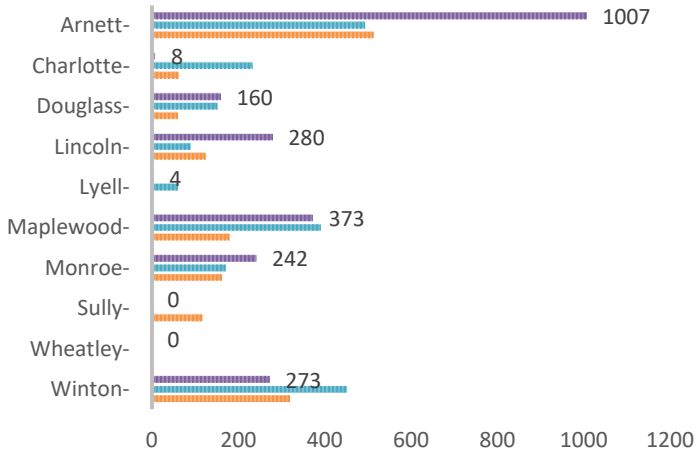
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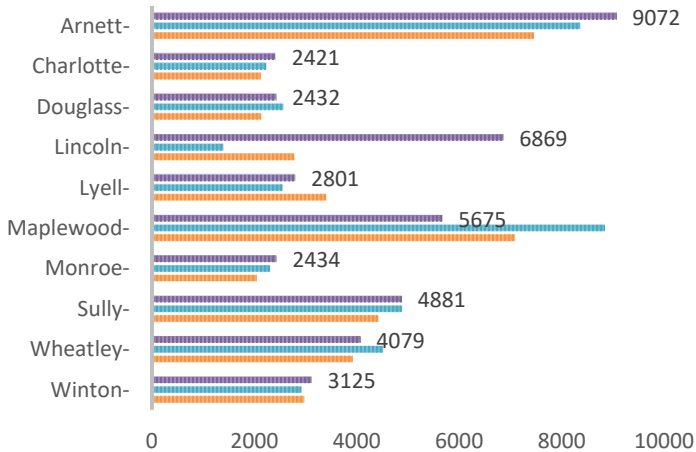
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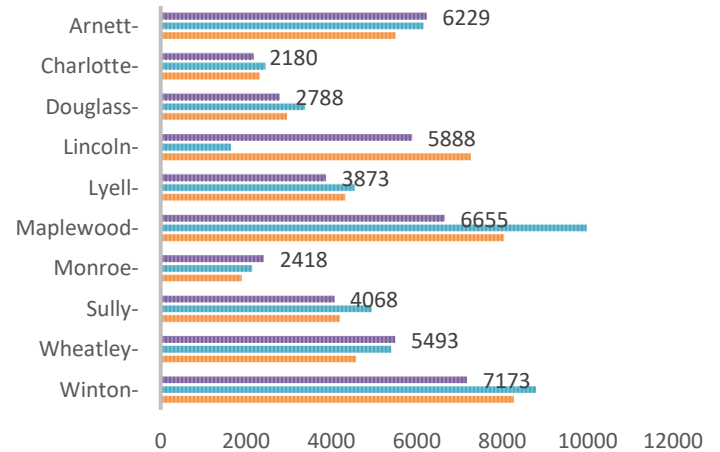
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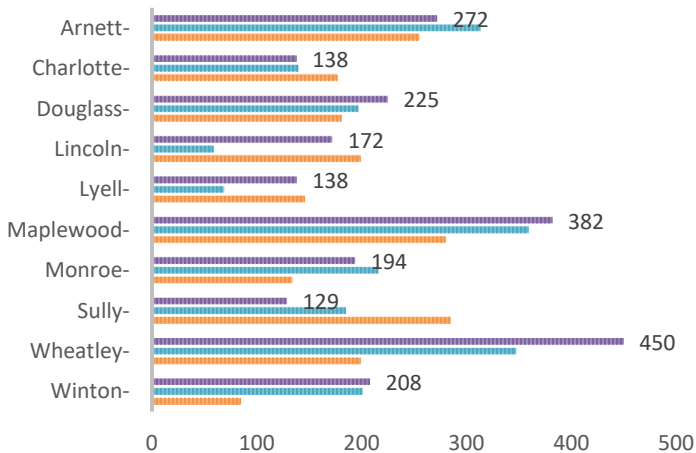
COMPUTER HOURS



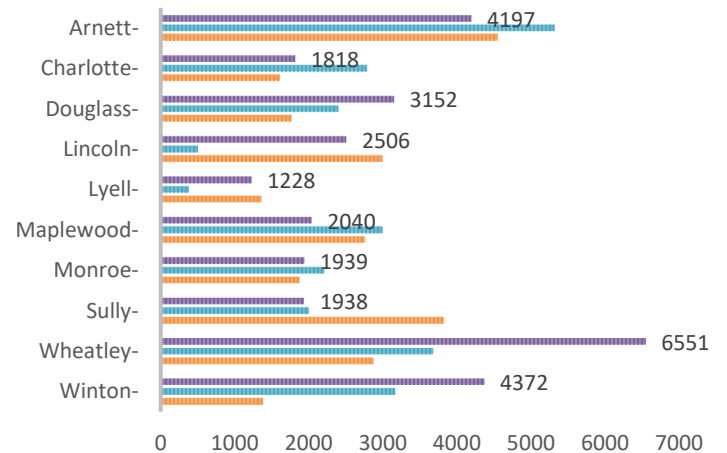
WIFI SESSIONS



GROUP PROGRAMS



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



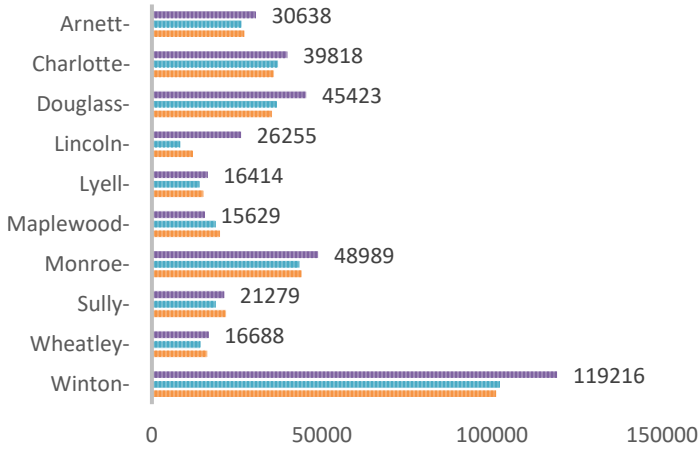
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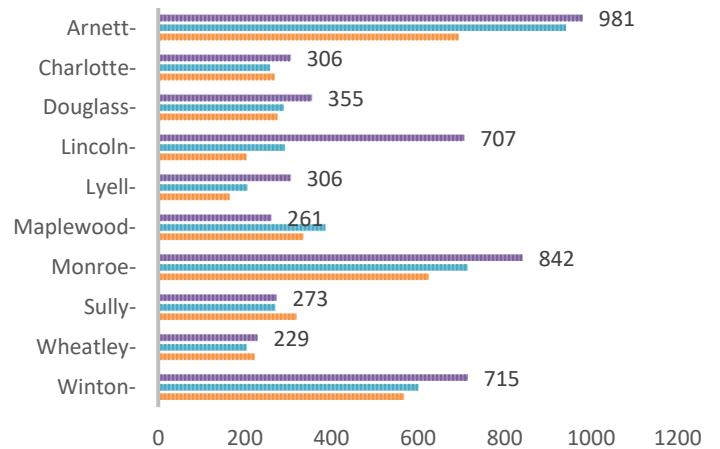
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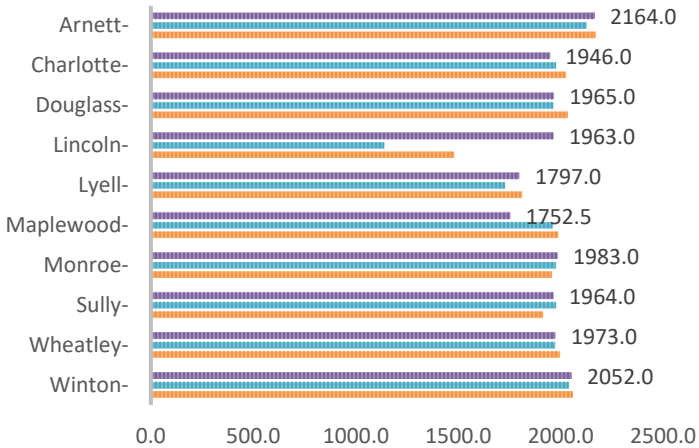
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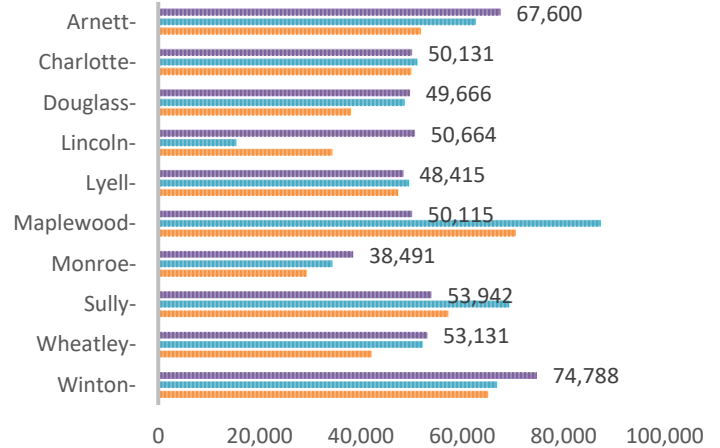
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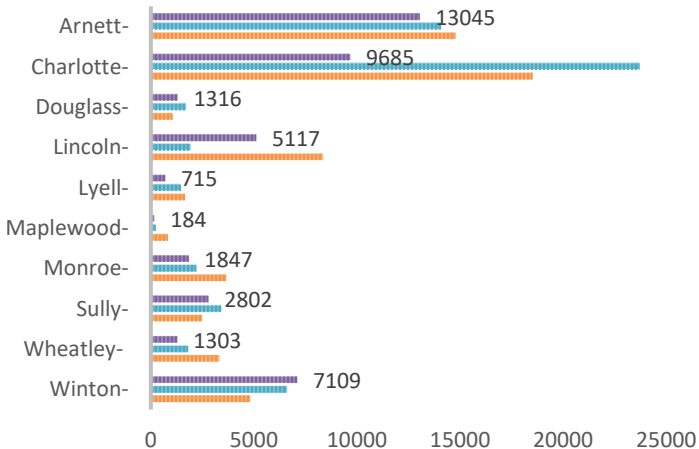
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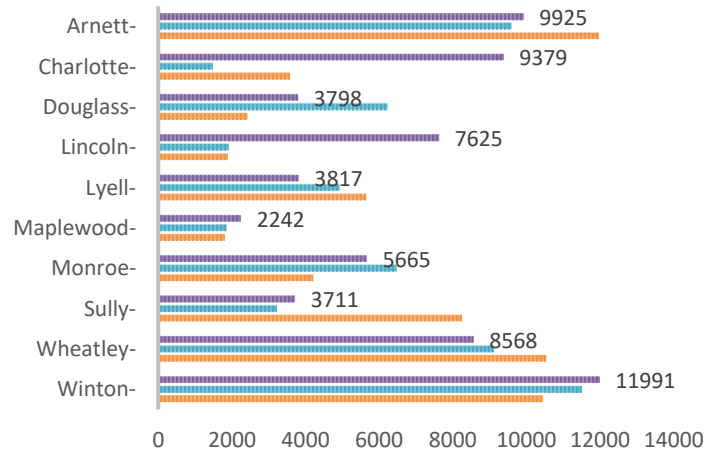
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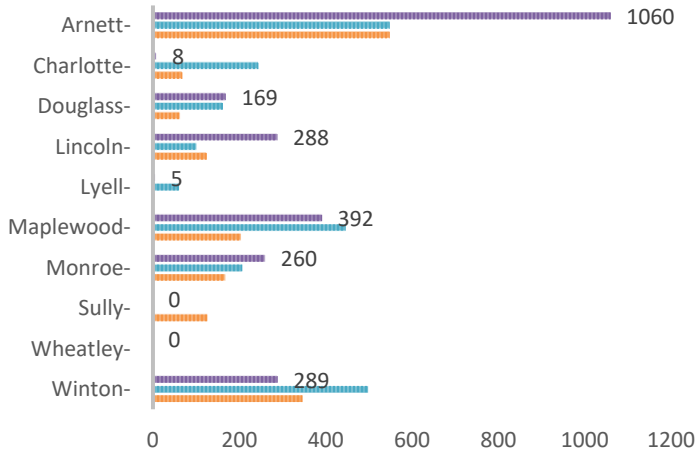
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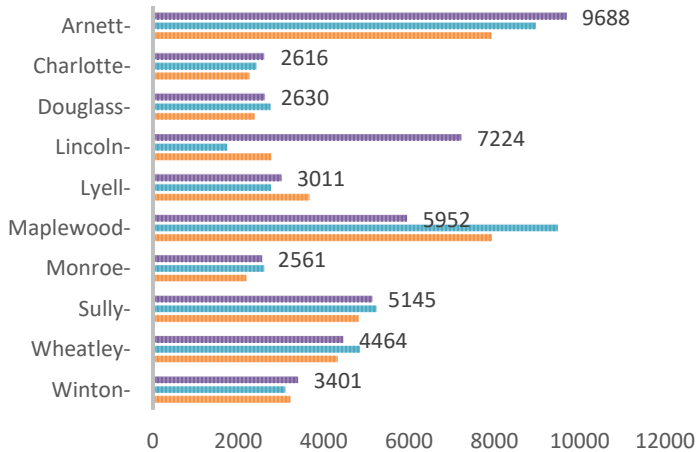
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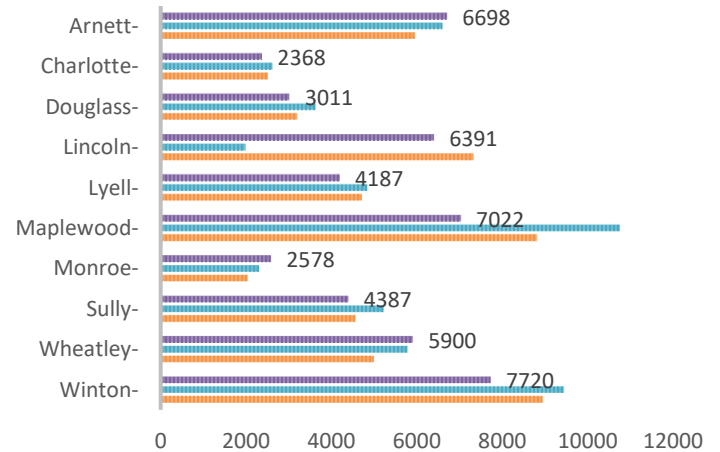
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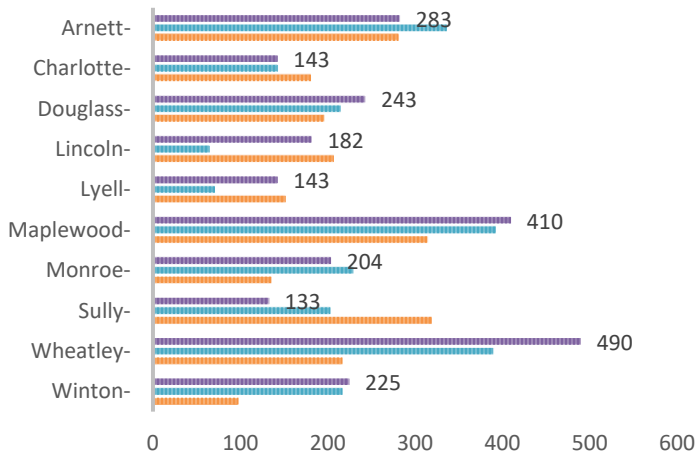
COMPUTER HOURS



WIFI SESSIONS



GROUP PROGRAMS



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

