

A black and white photograph of the Butler Area Public Library. The building is a multi-story brick structure with several windows. In the foreground, there is a large, leafless tree and a wooden sign that reads "BUTLER AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY". The sign features a circular logo with an 'i' and an arrow. The entire image is overlaid with a teal-colored graphic on the left side, which contains the text "ANNUAL REPORT 2020" in white, bold, sans-serif font. The teal graphic also extends to the bottom right corner, where the library's address and phone number are listed in white, bold, sans-serif font.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

**BUTLER AREA
PUBLIC LIBRARY
218 N. MCKEAN ST.
BUTLER, PA 16001
724-287-1715**

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A Note from the Director's Desk

The past year has likely been the most challenging of our lifetime. The pandemic has impacted all aspects of our lives to some degree. As I reflected on the events of the past year, I thankfully was able to identify several rays of hope shining through the darkness.

Last March, I received the email notification mandating the immediate closure of all library buildings in Pennsylvania. Without much warning, the Butler Area Public Library staff was forced to be even more creative than usual. The BAPL team met the challenge to think out of the box with gusto. We produced numerous virtual programs including the BAPL Home for the Holidays special, created crafts and activity kits for all ages, implemented grab and go services, and provided no-contact reference services. Several grants were secured including funding to create a Professional Resource Center with an online presence. As a result, several staff members discovered new talents, skills, and passions.

Despite the pandemic, the staff was also presented with opportunities to establish new collaborative efforts with various organizations and community groups. The staff worked with the Butler Fall Fest committee to provide activities in lieu of the Fall Fest, provided Door-Stop Delivery Services to Lowrie Place residents, collected items for Girl Scouts service projects, hosted a Dr. Seuss Party with members of the GFWC Jr. Women's Club of Butler, and presented activities for the YMCA Reach & Rise programs.

Although we were met with emotional and physical fatigue throughout the year, I have sensed a refreshed dedication amidst the staff and myself to serve our patrons. We truly miss interacting with our patrons. I look forward to the day when we can open our doors without the necessary restrictions for the safety of our community.

As we enter into a new year, I have renewed hope. No matter the challenges 2021 brings, we as a community can overcome them together. May your New Year be blessed with good health, love, and hope.

Happy New Year!

Best Regards,
Lori Hinderliter

Organizational Information

MISSION

The Butler Area Public Library will continue to provide programs, services and a balanced collection which will serve and enhance the informational, educational and cultural needs of the greater Butler community, thereby creating possibilities for individual and community growth and development.

VISION

To serve as a versatile community hub of evolving information access, creativity and collaboration. Through innovative programming, relevant collections and superior services, our goal is to empower an informed, educated and connected community.

GOALS

- Support Intellectual Freedom
- Promote Technology and Information Access
- Promote Education and Lifelong Learning
- Foster Community Culture and History
- Cultivate Innovation and Excellence
- Embrace Diversity

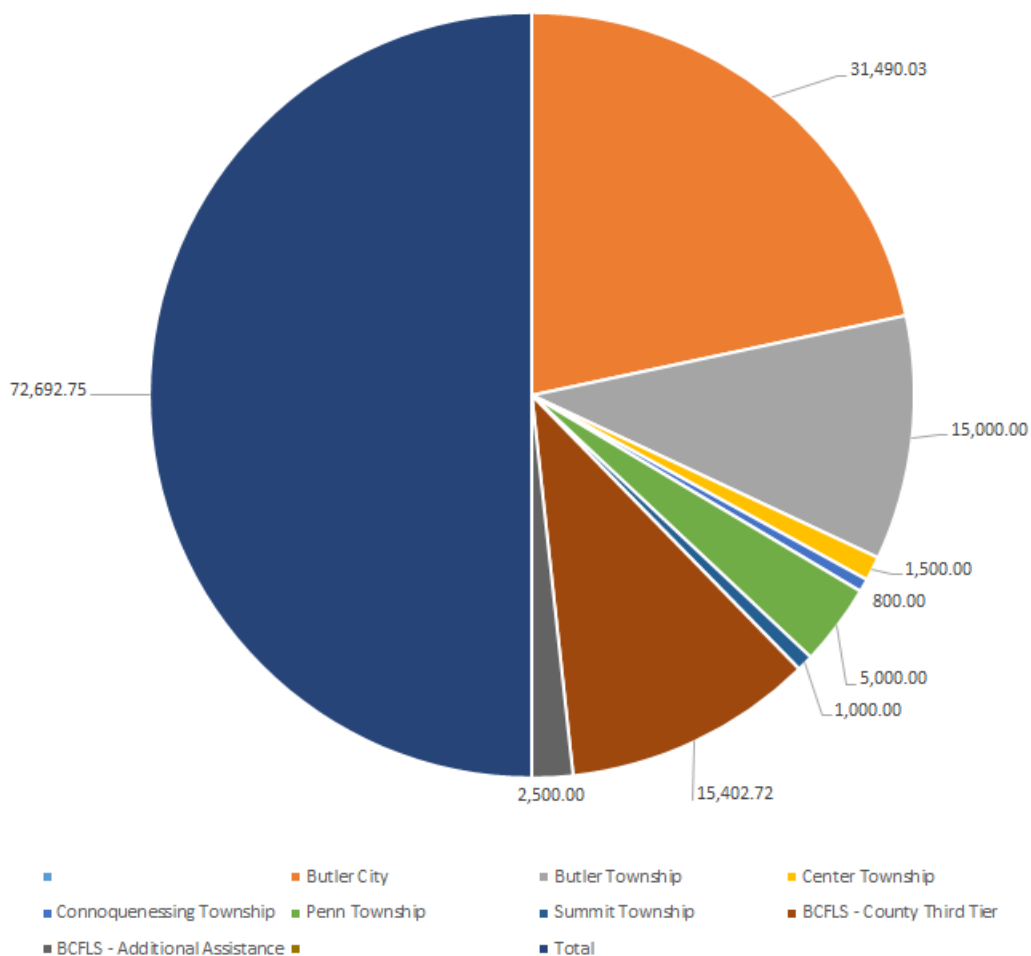
Funding

STATE AID

The state aid for 2020 was \$176,333.35.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING

The city of Butler, five surrounding townships, and BCFLS supported the Butler Area Public Library by donating \$72,692.75.



MY LIBRARY CAMPAIGN

The library raised \$23,756 through our 2020 "My Library" campaign.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Library donated \$3,475.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

Other gifts and memorials given to the library amounted to \$25,919.

GRANTS

The library also received \$22,740 in grants.

Programming

ADULTS

In 2020, as with most things, library programs looked a little different. After a few in-person programs were held early in the year the quarantine for COVID-19 began. We quickly realized we would need to think outside of the box, but this was not going to stop us from reaching out to our community with programming opportunities.

Library staff worked hard to create online experiences. Our quarterly held game days were transferred to Discord where over 50 people played games together online by the end of 2020. We used Google Forms to create a Choose Your Own Adventure entitled Onward to Adventure which has been played nearly 200 times.

We created videos on our YouTube channel showing our patrons how to borrow online resources. More videos were created by our Genealogy department and Youth Services, and you will read about those in their reports.

Once the staff was back in the building we began offering curbside pick-up of materials and reference services such as printing, copying, and faxing. We also offered some Grab'n'Go crafts for adults.

When we could no longer visit the Lowrie Place, one of our community outreach locations, we weeded our large print collection to make room for some newer materials and took the books we weeded and donated them to the residents who live there.

2020 brought with it many difficulties and challenges, but we hope through our efforts we were able to shine a little bit of light in the darkness.

- Peter Bess, Assistant Director

GENEALOGY AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

In 2020, we answered 925 research questions from patrons in 31 US states and 3 countries -- Mexico, Sweden, and Germany. As always, the questions asked were as varied as the locations they arrived from. Our patrons included amateur and professional genealogists, attorneys, journalists, students, and title searchers. We found death records, copied historic news articles, answered questions about DNA results, broke down 19th century “brick walls,” and explained courthouse records.

Library card holders independently dug into their family roots with gusto in 2020. Our users hit “search” 4,876 times on Heritage Quest and a whopping 33,650 times on Ancestry Library Edition! We were able to add a portal on our website to extend Ancestry Library Edition access to users at home because of stay-at-home orders; normally it has only been available while connecting at select library locations.

We added 92 new items to our Genealogy reference collection in 2020, including books, research files, and microfilm.

Programming looked a little different in most of 2020, and like many institutions we adapted by transitioning from our traditional in-person library classes to virtual.

Before closures were put in place, I taught 2 in-person group genealogy classes, attended by 43 people. I held one other in-person program in the fall while we were open on a limited basis, as a collaboration with a history class from Butler County Community College. This group event was part-research instruction for 4 history students who are creating biographical profiles for future Butler Historical Society programs, and part-Q&A session about careers in the history field.

During shutdowns, I taught 3 live classes over Zoom for our library and for the Slippery Rock University Institute for Learning in Retirement -- Dig Into Deed Research, Ancestry Online, and Wills Research. Those live online classes were attended by 26 participants.

When the library was shut down by state order in March, I started a series of recorded programs called "Family History Fridays." Between March and November, I produced 21 videos for the series, providing tips for everyone from the absolute beginner to advanced researchers. The FHF series has 450 views on Youtube, and 12,379 impressions on Facebook. It gained traction through shares on social media and through the genealogy clearinghouse site Cyndi's List, reaching many viewers outside our normal geographic area.

I was elected to a 2-year Steering Committee position for the national Society of American Archivists' Lone Arrangers Section, which focuses on the needs of archivists working in smaller institutions. I was also the recipient of a Society of American Archivists Foundation travel award, allowing me to virtually attend the SAA Annual Conference in August.

"I appreciate how well done your classes are. They're so informative and you have such a nice, natural manner for doing the videos."

- Virtual program participant feedback.

"Because of your help, I found my great grandmother's grave and my second great grandparents also. I know this may not be a big deal to most people, but it is a huge deal to me. Thank you for your time and help!"

- Researcher feedback.

- Margaret Hewitt, Special Collections Librarian

BUTLER AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY



2020 | GENEALOGY DEPT YEAR IN REVIEW

COVID-19 closures meant finding new ways to deliver programs and research to patrons



925

Research
Requests
Answered

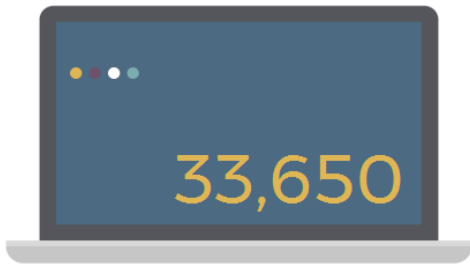


From Researchers In

31 States

3 Countries

(Sweden, Germany, and Mexico)



Number of times
library users hit
"Search" on Ancestry

SERVICES ADDED IN RESPONSE TO COVID

- Live Zoom Programs
- Recorded On-Demand Programs
- In-Home Ancestry Use
- Scheduled Department Visits



92

New items in
genealogy collection

3
In-Person Classes

3
Live Zoom Classes

21
On-Demand Virtual
Programs

12,379
Virtual Program
Views

"I appreciate how well done your classes are. They're so informative and you have such a nice, natural manner for doing the videos." - *Virtual program participant feedback*

"Because of your help, I found my great grandmother's grave and my second great grandparents also. I know this may not be a big deal to most people, but it is a huge deal to me. Thank you for your time and help!" - *Researcher feedback*



CHILDREN'S

2020, what a year, right? Certainly not the one we envisioned. The year started off very strong, with several in person programs happening in January and February, including make and takes, storytimes, and a writing workshop. Ms. Tiffany received the New Leader's Travel Grant from the Public Library Association, which allowed her to travel to the PLA 2020 conference in Nashville at the end of February. In early March, we continued with storytime and held a large program for Dr. Seuss Day, with the help of the GFWC Jr. Women's Club of Butler.

Then in mid-March, everything shifted gears. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, library staff were put into full work from home status beginning the week of March 15th, and the physical library was closed. This meant that access to in person programs and physical materials was unexpectedly halted. The goal of the Children's Department was to overcome this access barrier as quickly as possible, to maintain some sense of normalcy for the children and families we serve. Tiffany immediately began offering virtual storytime sessions on Facebook, with the first one being March 17. Additionally, all staff began compiling virtual resources, including "virtual fieldtrips", an extended free trial of Tumble Books (which is geared toward children and families), and increased access to our digital resources on OverDrive. Staff remained in work from home mode for 9 weeks, returning to the library the week of May 17. During this 9 week period, in addition to weekly virtual storytimes, Tiffany held 4 weekly family craft sessions in March and April, as well as 3 adult crafting demonstrations. In May, Tiffany did read aloud videos of chapter books for school age children, posting every week day. During this work from home period, Tiffany worked with Lori to move the entire Summer Challenge to a virtual format. The library purchased Beanstack, a platform that allows patrons to register for and track reading challenges virtually. They underwent training, designed

the Summer Challenge, and had the library's Beanstack account live to the public by mid-May.

While staff would return to the library in mid-May, patrons would not be able to access the library until July 1. In order to continue serving patrons, Tiffany continued planning and holding virtual programs, began offering grab and go activity bags, and started offering book bundles for family check out, in addition to holds, once curbside service began June 8th. Virtual programs continued throughout the end of the year, including storytimes, another month of read aloud chapter books in November, information literacy programs, STEM programs, and holiday programs. Notably, a series of information literacy videos called Library 101 was created to support students who were being homeschooled or cyber schooled, as well as public school students who had reduced access to the school library. Virtual holiday programs, in the form of home light up night kits and a staff created holiday special, successfully capped the year in December. Tiffany also created a holiday program for the ARC as part of our virtual outreach.

Despite having limited physical access to the community, the Children's Department maintained an incredibly successful partnership with WQED Education; through the Inquire Within program, we were able to do outreach in the form of grab and go bags. We participated in the Library Explorer's program which promoted the Butler Library, along with 10 other libraries in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, and Westmoreland County, allowing people to "visit" the library virtually. WQED Education also supported and contributed to our virtual programming efforts, including a STEM focused virtual math camp, a Constitution Week Giveaway, voting education passive programs, and our holiday programs.

A new community partnership with the Butler Fall Festival occurred this year as well. While the festival itself, like most other large community events, was cancelled, the festival committee donated money to the library in order to sponsor a day of programming to keep the spirit of the festival alive. A day of socially distanced family programming was held on September 17th, with program offering for all age groups.

Additionally, Tiffany worked on a project in conjunction with the Reference staff throughout the course of the year. The pandemic left many people in difficult economic situations, particularly where employment was concerned. In May, staff created a series of employment videos. Tiffany then used those videos to apply for, and successfully receive, the Libraries Lead With Digital Skills grant. This allowed them to create a permanent resource for the library, the Professional Resource Center. Tiffany also spent time this year serving on the SEE-IT Award (for youth graphic novels) jury, and on the Pennsylvania Library Associations's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.

By the end of the year, the Children's Department had offered 195 programs, with 18,982 individual program interactions. 23 permanent resource videos were created and added to our YouTube channel. 26,609 physical items were circulated from the children's department (additionally, 136 digital items were circulated on Hoopla, plus additional circulation of electronic items on OverDrive, but at this time data is unavailable).

Throughout this year, many of our patrons have expressed how much they miss us, and how much they appreciate the services we have continued to offer. We never hesitate to tell them that we miss and appreciate them as well.

What a year, whew.

- Tiffany Harkleroad, Youth Services Librarian



Butler Area Public Library Children's Department 2020 At a Glance

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic altering our entire service delivery model, this year we achieved

195
Programs
Offered



18,982
Individual program
interactions



23
Permanent
resource videos
added to
YouTube

26,609
Physical items
circulated



*additional
circulation of digital
items as well




Community Partnerships and Outreach

- WQED Education
- Butler Fall Festival
- GFWC Jr. Women's Club of Butler
- The ARC

Professional Development

- SEE-IT Award Jury Member
- PaLA EDI Committee Member

Moved to fully online Summer Challenge (both tracking and programming)



**95 Participants
Birth to Grade 5**

Received PLA New Leaders Travel Grant to attend PLA 2020



Received PLA Libraries Lead with Digital Skills Grant and collaborated with BAPL Reference to create PRC

YA - TWEENS AND TEENS

2020 was the year of change. The year began with some in-person programming, the most popular one being a MarioKart tournament hosted in January. What was really special about the event is that it was open to young adults from grades 4-12. Though the participants were diverse in age, all got along very well and were respectful and courteous towards one another. Altogether, 17 in-person programs were offered from January to March, and 61 young adults participated.

The beginning of the year also allowed for passive programming, in which a prompt or a question to answer was posed. 14 of these were offered, and 382 young adults participated.

After March and the closures that came with it, the entire library had to change how we delivered our programs and resources to patrons when they couldn't physically be in the building. The YA Department continued to post digital book displays on social media, and planning began for how to approach Summer Challenge 2020.

For Imagine Your Story Summer Challenge, virtual programs were offered for tweens and teens each week, as well as "grab-n-gos," which are continuing to climb in popularity into the New Year. Grab-n-gos are placed at the entrance of the library allowing for quick, no-contact pickup. Attendance wasn't incredibly high for summer programs that took place at a specific time, but those that were posted in video format to be viewed at any time were very successful. 18 programs were offered, and although only 11 young adults participated in live programs, views on videos skyrocketed participation to 567. 9 kinds of grab-n-go kits were made and distributed each week, and a total of 165 bags were given out. Another change in Summer Challenge was the way patrons registered and logged their progress. An app called Beanstack paved the way for a paperless, completely virtual process. 36 young adults registered to participate and collectively earned 164 achievement

badges and read 99 books over a 9 week period.

The YA Department continued after August to give out grab-n-gos on a biweekly basis. 9 kits were offered, and 305 bags were distributed. Virtual programming also continued with 13 live programs and 10 passive programs. 59 and 1461 young adults participated in each of these, respectively. The high number is largely influenced by a couple of video series, as well as a “Halloween Special” released in October.

Collection development was a big focus in the YA Department this year. Continuing to add diversity to each of the fiction genres was a priority, as well as weeding books that weren’t moving. Updated nonfiction books were added to the collection as well. Additional information was also added to the spines of YA Fiction books; any books that are a part of a series now have a clear label with the volume number or order in the series.

Overall, the YA Department witnessed growth throughout 2020, and we hope it continues through 2021. A total of 72 programs were offered, and the total number of program interactions was 2,530. Our goals for the coming year include increasing program attendance through more outreach, extending the volume of grab-n-go kits, continuing to develop the collection to be the best it can be, and providing services and support to as many young adults who need it.

- Tristyn Parker, Library Assistant

BAPL YA Department



2020 | YEAR IN REVIEW

Top Ten Checked Out YA Titles



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Established virtual programming
- Offered new grab-n-go kits
- Increase in online engagement
- Collection development
 - Weeding titles with low circulation, clearly marking titles in a series



GOALS



- Extending outreach by partnering with local youth organizations
- Increasing program attendance
- Increasing grab-n-go volumes
- Collection development
 - Adding new titles of diverse authors and characters, creating readers' advisory materials

1,341*
YA Items Checked Out
*physical materials only

72
YA Programs Offered

2,530
YA Program Participation

319
New books added to YA Collection

439
Most views on a YA video

470
Grab-n-go bags distributed