



20 Annual 23 Report

BERGENFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

50 W. Clinton Avenue | Bergenfield, NJ 07621 | 201 - 387 - 4040 | bergenfieldlibrary.org

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Bergenfield Public Library

ABOUT THE LIBRARY

The Bergenfield Public Library provides educational opportunities, resources, and services that enable residents of all ages to maximize their true potential and unlock the best in Bergenfield.



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

**“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it.”
— Halford E. Luccock**

2023 marked a year of tremendous accomplishments for the Bergenfield Library. As you will see in this report, the Library experienced significant increases in daily visitors, program attendance, new library card sign ups, notary and passport appointments, computer usage, community room rentals, and circulation. It is truly amazing to see how much the community uses their library.

However, this kind of growth cannot occur in a vacuum. The successes that occurred over the year simply could not have been done if not for the following groups:

- **Library Staff**
 - In spite of budget shortfalls and unanticipated staff turnover, our exceptional staff demonstrated unparalleled commitment, and adaptability in the face of uncertainty. Their unwavering dedication was reflected in their willingness to go above and beyond, whether through resuming one on one computer/technology classes, adding photography services to our passport program or coordinating another US Citizenship test prep cohort. As Director, I am tremendously proud of the staff - they are the Library's most important asset
- **Friends of Bergenfield Library**
 - Thanks to their ongoing generosity, the Library was able to purchase a custom designed 3 car train play fixture for the Children's Room. The Friends help us purchase all of the proverbial "bells and whistles" that enhance the patron's experience and we are appreciative of their hard work and dedication to the Library.
- **Bergenfield Elks Lodge #1477**
 - As recipients of the Elks' National Foundation Beacon grant, the Library was able to purchase multiple sensory wall fixtures and play furniture for the Children's Activity Room.
- **Bergenfield Lions Club**
 - The Lions Club has been a longtime supporter of the Bergenfield Library. Their annual donation allows staff to purchase additional large print materials for the adult collection.
- **Borough of Bergenfield** and the governing body for its continued financial support
- **Library Board of Trustees** for their guidance and direction



Thank you to all for your continuous support and trust in our mission. Together, the Bergenfield Library will continue to be a beacon of knowledge, resilience and community engagement.

Allison Ballo
Allison Ballo
Library Director

STRATEGIC PLAN ACTIVITY

HOW'D WE DO IN 2023?

Mission



The Bergenfield Public Library provides opportunities, resources, and services that enable residents of all ages to maximize their true potential and unlock the best in Bergenfield.



Goals & Objectives

Goal One: Lead the Community as The Primary Cultural and Civic Center for Lifelong Learning



- Hosted a diverse slate of multicultural programs, including “Stories from the Road to Freedom” documentary (celebrating Black History month), Latin dance classes (celebrating Hispanic Heritage month), Sayawan Na! Philippine Folk Dance Performance and “Finding Your Filipino Voice” class in tandem with the Filipino School of NY/NJ (celebrating Filipino American History month)
- 133 children and 73 adults participated in this year’s Summer Reading program and read a combined total of 1,885 books.
- Resumption of one on one technology assistance program.
- In tandem with the ongoing Museum Pass program, the Library is an affiliate with the Wildlife Conservation Society. Bergenfield card holders are now able to get 20% off tickets for Bronx Zoo, Central Park Zoo, New York Aquarium, Queens Zoo, and Prospect Park Zoo.
- Expanded the Library of Things collection to include mobile hotspots with unlimited data.

- Resumption of US citizenship exam classes and multiple weeknight ESL conversation groups
- Expanded online searchable local history archive with over 1,200 files (and growing!) Access the archive via bergenfieldlibrary.org/localhistory/



Goal Two: Foster a Comfortable and Friendly Space

- Students from BHS National Art Honor Society designed and installed custom artwork for the Clinton and Anderson Avenue windows to celebrate the Library's Summer Reading Club. This year's theme was "All Together Now."
- Sensory play wall fixtures were installed in the Children's Activity Room in March. These fixtures were generously subsidized by the Bergenfield Elks Lodge #1477.
- 4 new security cameras and an updated server were installed in various locations throughout the building. The updated cameras are more sophisticated 360 degree models. The new camera software is accessible via app as well as via desktop with a 30-day recording window.
- The custom designed 3 car train play fixture was installed in the Children's Room in September. These fixtures were generously subsidized by the Friends of the Library.
- Library staff participated in multiple professional development workshops on topics including team building, workplace discrimination and sexual harassment and active shooter training.

Goal Three: Create Opportunities for Collaboration

- Hosted the following Borough events:
 - Mayor and Council work sessions and meetings
 - Rent Leveling Board meetings
 - Barrier Free committee meetings
 - Stigma Free committee meetings
 - Veterans Advisory committee meetings
 - Zoning Board meetings

- Hosted in person class visits from Hoover, Washington and Lincoln elementary schools, Roy W. Brown middle school and students from TriValley and the Bear Den.
- Youth Services staff coordinated a recurring story time series at Sweet Peas Learning Center and Bergenfield Lightbridge Academy daycare.
- Participated in the Bergenfield School District's new teacher orientation.
- Worked with the Filipino School of NY/NJ to provide pre-recorded "Kuwentuhang Pilipino Story Time" videos to be posted on the Library's Facebook page. The videos are posted on the 2nd Saturday of each month
- Served as the inaugural host for the Philippine consulate's traveling exhibit about Filipino comics to celebrate "Buwan ng Wika" (National Language Month) Brief excerpts of popular Filipino comics were printed on large foam boards and mounted on display easels and exhibited across the bridge.
- Partnered with Bergenfield Domino's Club to host a family game night program.
- Partnered with the Bergenfield Stigma Free committee to host a Drag Queen bingo program for adults as part of Pride month.



Goal Four: Strengthen Community Awareness and Engagement

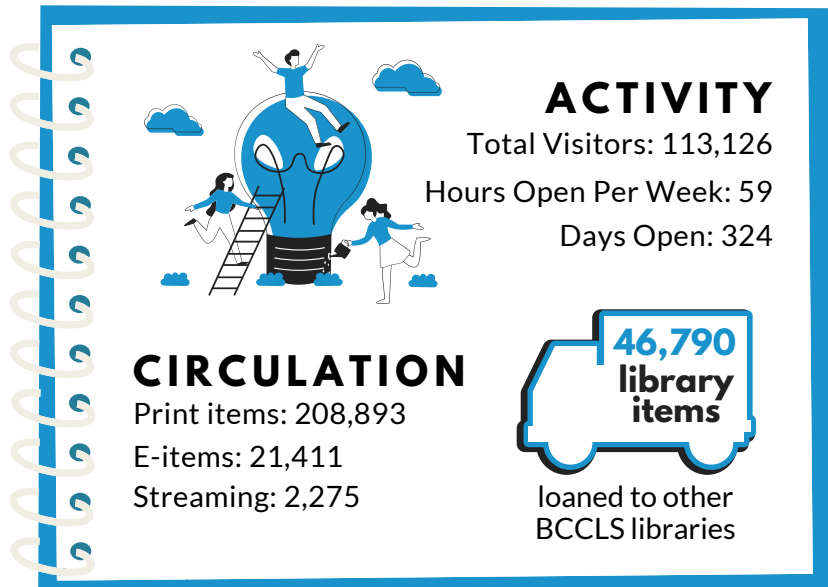
- Executed direct mail “Welcome to Bergenfield” postcard campaign to new homeowners.
- Library staff presented an “Introduction to Your Library” lecture to members of St. John Golden Age Club at Conlon Hall.
- Library staff participated in the Bergenfield School District’s MLK Day of Service and Vietnam Memorial moving wall exhibit and the Borough’s Memorial Day Parade, Family Fun Day, Trunk or Treat and Holiday at the Park.

Goal Five: Increase Operational Excellence, Fiscal Stability and Sustainability

- Continued participation in the Bergen County Cooperative Pricing System for reduced rates on electricity and natural gas.
- Submitted proposal for NJ Community Center Connect Digital federal grant for various capital improvements. Included in the Library’s application were letters of support from FDU, Bergenfield Health Department and the Stigma Free committee.
- Became an affiliate with Fairleigh Dickinson University’s Social Work graduate program. An FDU intern (Masters of Social Work) will begin working their service hours at the Library in January 2024.
- The Library’s passport program conducted 309 appointments and generated \$17,000 in revenue. The onsite fee-based photography service was launched in May.



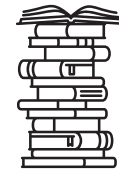
2023 BY THE NUMBERS



PROGRAMS

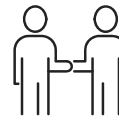


14,680 attendees came to **395** programs

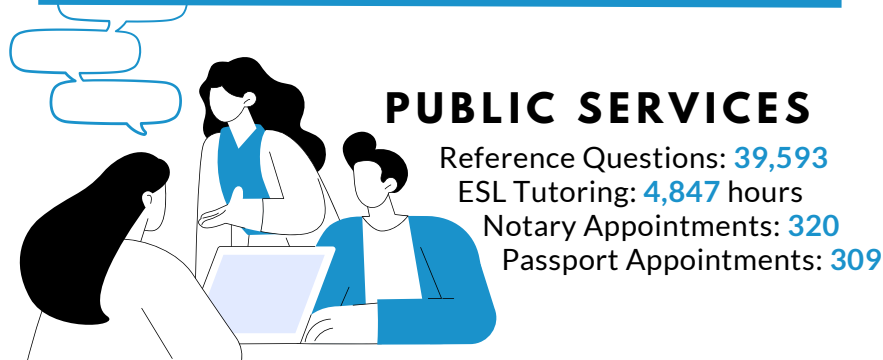


206 participants read

2,885 books in our Summer Reading Club



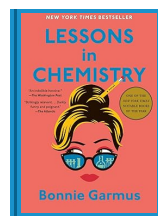
122 groups used the Library as their meeting spot



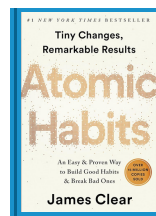
ELECTRONIC SERVICES

Computer Sessions: **5,000**
Wireless Sessions: **93,809**

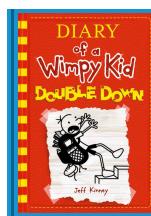
MOST POPULAR CHECKOUTS OF 2023



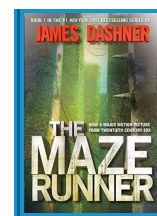
Fiction



Non-Fiction



Children



Young Adult



TV and Film

BREAKING RECORDS IN 2023

During the past year, we saw an increase in:



Community Group Room Rentals



Foot traffic in the building



Social media following



of items borrowed

\$717

Average value of materials borrowed on a Bergenfield Library card

MEET THE NEW STAFF

The Library welcomed several staff members to the team in 2023. Here's a guide to some of the new faces you'll see around the building; stop by and say hi!

Adult Services Department



Carmen R. (she/her/ella)

Adult Programming Associate

Enthusiastic about fostering diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, Carmen is a dedicated learner and avid reader with a passion for helping others in the community. She is eager to channel this enthusiasm into the library, where she anticipates coordinating dynamic and inclusive adult programs for the Bergenfield community.

Youth Services Department

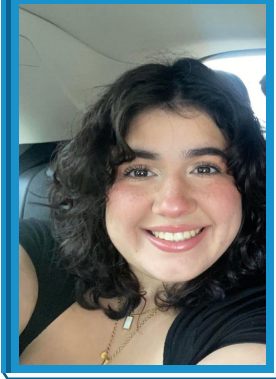


Michela K. (she/her)

Youth Services Librarian

Michela has her MLIS and has worked in BCCLS libraries for almost five years. She has experience working in both the children's and adult departments, doing both circulation and reference duties. She is enjoying her new role as a children's librarian here in Bergenfield and in her free time enjoys spending time reading and playing with her two cats.

Circulation Department



Katy D. (she/they)

Library Assistant

In addition to working at the Bergenfield Library, I also work at the Rochelle Park Public Library. My hobbies include reading, puzzles, and painting. I am so happy to be a part of the circulation staff and excited to learn new things everyday!



Mary T. (she/her)

Library Assistant

I live a quiet life! I am from Bergen Co, born and raised. I have 4 adult children and 2 rescue mutts. I am a retired civil servant and now work in 2 libraries in BCCLS. My husband and I enjoy traveling.



Sam D. (they/them)

Library Assistant

Sam is a lifelong patron of the Bergenfield public library working towards becoming a professional in the fields of both Library and Information Science, and Voice Acting. As an avid music lover, they sing, dance, and attend concerts as often as possible! At home, Sam has two matching tabby cats (named Prince and Luna) whom they love very much.

WELCOME TO THE LIBRARY!

SNAPSHOTS FROM 2023



FRIENDS BUSINESS SPONSORS 2023

The Friends of the Bergenfield Library are deeply grateful to the businesses and organizations which have signed on as sponsors for the year 2023. We ask all of our patrons and Friends to remember the kindness that the business sponsors have shown to us. Please support our local areas' businesses and organizations. For a full list including addresses and contacts, please go to bergenfieldlibrary.org/sponsors

Benefactor Level

- Arista Trophies & Awards
- [Columbia Bank](#)
- E.G. Enriquez & Co., Inc./H&R Block
- [GJEM Division Otterstedt Insurance Agency](#)
- Inserra Supermarkets
- [NVE BankK](#)
- Public Service Electric & Gas Company
- [Riewerts Memorial Home](#)
- Scott Graphics Printing Co., Inc.
- [Visions federal Credit Union](#)

Gold Level

- Garden State Realty Group
- [TPR Restaurant and Pizzeria](#)

Silver Level

- Bergenfield Lions Club
- [Fasano's Shoes](#)
- Triple J. Family, Inc.
- [Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robbins](#)

Platinum Level

- Armbruster Landscaping LLC
- [Asian Pacific Travel & Services Inc.](#)
- Behnke's Building Supply/Paramus Building Supply Co.
- [Bergen New Bridge Medical Center](#)
- Bergenfield Antlers Lodge #35
- [Country Green Landscaping](#)
- Dave Miller - Re/Max Integrity
- [Doctors Freed & Gliksman](#)
- East-West Electrical Contractors, Inc.
- [The Filipino School of New York and New Jersey](#)
- Grand Essex Market
- [Honda of Tenafly](#)
- Knights of Columbus St. John's Council #1345
- [Lightbridge Academy of Bergenfield](#)
- McDonald's of Bergenfield
- [McSpirit & Beckett Real Estate](#)
- O'Neill Contracting, Inc.
- [Portland Wines & Liquors](#)
- Russo Real Estate
- [Service Excellence Organization, Inc. D/B/A The Parts Drop](#)
- Shaw's Complete Security
- [St. John's Golden Age Club](#)
- Tommy Fox's
- [Washington Dental Associates](#)

If you have a business which is not listed above and would like to become a sponsor, please contact George Armbruster by e-mail at gwarmbruster@bergenfieldlibrary.org or by phone at (201) 906-4469.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

2023 BY THE NUMBERS

Adult & Youth Services

- Staff answered **39,593** reference questions
- **14,680** people attended **395** library programs
- ESL tutors + students spent **4,847 hours** together on one on one classes, group conversation classes and US Citizenship classes
- **133** children and **73** adults participated in this year's Summer Reading program and read a combined total of **1,885** books

Technology

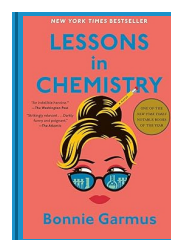
- **5,000** Computer Sessions
- **93,809** Wireless Sessions (increase of 15% over 2022)
- **21,411** eBook and eAudio items borrowed (increase of 4% over 2022)
- **2,275** movies downloaded off of Kanopy
- **10% increase** in social media following

Services

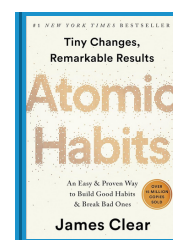
- **320** notary appointments
- **309** passport appointments (increase of 10% over 2022)
- **122** meeting room rentals by local community groups (increase of 51% over 2022)

Collections

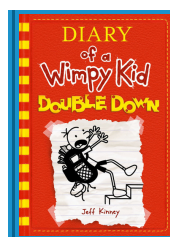
- **10,796** Bergenfield residents have a library card
- **202,839** items were checked out (increase of 4% over 2022)
- **113,126** library visits (increase of 26% over 2022)
- **46,790** items loaned to other BCCLS libraries
- **Most Popular Checkouts:**



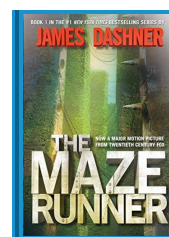
Fiction



Non-Fiction



Children



Young Adult



TV and Film

Bergenfield cardholders
saved an average of
\$717
by using the library.

\$2,191,559 worth of items
were checked out