

President
Olga Granat

Vice President
Kevin Pazour

Secretary
Paul Knauff

Treasurer
Julie Giorgi

Members
Kristy Merritt
Roger Rhodes
Stu Summers

Legal Counsel
Clay Patton

Library Director
Jesse Butz

Porter County Public Library
System
103 Jefferson St.
Valparaiso, IN
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pcpls.org

BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, November 20, 2024

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on November 20, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting at the Valparaiso Public Library, 103 Jefferson Street, Valparaiso, IN 46383.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

The public comment session is provided as an opportunity for patrons to address the Board of Trustees on matters related to agenda items.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of the Minutes from October 16, 2024
2. Financial Report
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Approval of the Claims Register
3. Approval of Communications
 - a. Friend's Report
 - b. Director's Report
 - c. Patron Comments

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

1. Kouts Roofing Bid Award
2. Portage Roof and Accident Update
3. 2025 Closing and Board Meeting Dates
4. Review of MOUs with Neighboring Libraries
5. New Library Website and Calendar Demo

Any other items
Adjournment
Signature Session

Future Meetings: (Dates and times subject to change) 4:00 P.M.

- December 18, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- January 15, 2025 - Valparaiso Public Library
- February 19, 2025 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Nov 20, 2024

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:02 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Olga Granat presided.

Members in attendance included Olga Granat, President; Kevin Pazour, Vice President; Secretary; Julie Giorgi, Treasurer; Roger Rhodes, Stu Summers. Kristy Merritt and Paul Knauff were absent. Also in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, and Assistant Director Inge Kokidko & Finance Manager Hayley Scott.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Oct 16, 2024

Financial Report

 Treasurer's Report

 Approval of the Claims Register

Approval of Communications

 Friends of the Library Report

 Director's Report

 Patron Comments

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roger Rhodes seconded the motion.

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Kouts Roofing Bid Award

Bids were summarized. Vendor certifications were discussed, as well as the recommendation to hold on approving a bid to allow all vendors to obtain all needed certifications. The timeline for the project was also discussed.

Motion: Stu Summers moved to “postpone to the December meeting”. Julie Giorgi seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Portage Roof and Accident Update

Delays to the quoting process were explained. The roofing project and canopy reduction were discussed, including timelines, options, material expenses and considerations. Allowed use of funds were also discussed.

2025 Closing and Board Meeting Dates

Dates for library closings and board meeting dates were proposed.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to “approve the proposed 2025 closing and board meeting dates”. Kevin Pazour seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Review of MOUs with Neighboring Libraries

Reciprocal services were reviewed, including the relative benefits given and received by PCPLS. It was recommended to withdraw patron request, ILL, and some ebook services from reciprocal patrons.

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to “allow [PCPLS] to turn off the reciprocal borrowing options for interlibrary loan, electronic books and audiobooks, as well as to no longer do purchase requests for reciprocal patrons.” Roger Rhodes seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

New Library Website and Calendar Demo

The website design process and rollout were summarized, and select features were demonstrated.

Any other business

Program and community engagement costs were discussed, and a more extensive review was requested for February. The Portage Library Garden property transfer was also discussed.

Adjournment

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to adjourn. Stu Summers seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary, Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees

October 2024 Director's Report

Overview

As the season changes in October, our team really shines as our branches are turned into fall festival wonderlands with decorations and programming that capture the essence of this magical season for our community.

Our Valpo branch hosted an enormously successful Fal Festival where hundreds of families took advantage of the wonderful weather to enjoy an engaging night at the library. Filled with pumpkins, face painting, and activities, patrons love the special events that highlight our facilities and our outstanding team.

Electronic materials continued their positive trend with an interesting pattern that is beginning to emerge: eAudio is becoming more popular than eBooks as a format. As patrons discover the convenience of this format and the amazing selection PCPLS offers, they adopt this format at a large rate and this format will soon eclipse eBooks as our second most popular format behind traditional paper books!

Important Upcoming Dates

- November
 - 20: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- December
 - 4: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 18: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
 - 20: Winter Wonderfest - Portage

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - None
- New Employment
 - Kyle Mason, Part-Time G1 - Portage
 - Christine Crawford, Part-Time G1 - Portage
- Promotions
 - Shayla Boothe, Valparaiso Clerk, (G)3
 - Charlie Miller, Valparaiso Clerk, (G)2
 - Shari Miller, North County Clerk, (G)2
- Interviews
 - Monique and Kellie interviewed candidates for a full-time position at the Valparaiso branch.
 - The Community Engagement team interviewed candidates for part-time positions in marketing and programming.
- Jesse attended an all-day HR conference from the Indiana Chamber regarding model employee policies.

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of October is that 83% of the budget should be expended. So far, 75% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$39,515.56 from Trust Indiana in October. Included in the total interest earned is the Mills Trust donation, which earned \$2,923.71.
- Hayley, Inge, and Jesse met with GIS insurance reps for our annual pre-renewal meeting. At this meeting, we reviewed our full benefits package and possibilities for enhancements.

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - Help Now & Job Now - \$5,000
 - Cancellations
 - None
- Contracts
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - SpendBridge - \$7,800
 - Aspen - \$8,500
 - Evergreen Consortium - \$46,938.23
 - Cancellations
 - None

Buildings & Grounds

- The lights and storywalk posts were installed in the Kouts Library Garden this month. It is really amazing to watch everything come together. Dawn and Jack will be going to talk to the Kouts Lion's Club next month to see if they would be interested in donating to the project.
- Jack is working on the fence variance for the Hebron Library Garden. He will be attending the Hebron Town Council meeting next month to see about getting the fee waived, using this time to also inform the council how beneficial this Library Garden will be to the community.
- The Valparaiso branch had its windows cleaned this month. We plan to make this a yearly project to ensure our facade stays looking sharp.
- Outdoor lighting was installed along the sidewalk on the Lois Street side of the Portage branch. This area can be fairly dark at night, but the much-needed lighting will allow safer walks from the north parking lot to the Lois Street entrance and Garden. This should also encourage usage of the east side of the building on a regular basis.

- Jesse met with a team with Parkreation to tour the branches. They provided invaluable insight into constructing a garden and are helping to procure some unique bike racks and garbage cans to add some flair to our spaces.
- Jesse and Inge met with a representative from Library Furniture International to go over possible desk options for our service points. While visiting, the rep was able to also show us some amazing options to enhance our youth zones and create extremely engaging spaces.
- Jesse and Jason met with representatives from Johnson Controls to review possible options to upgrade our system in a staggered fashion that will maximize our operating funds.
- Jesse has been conducting his ongoing monthly visits where he tours the facilities with the branch management team and conducts a detailed checklist to ensure our standards are being met. The teams have really embraced the checklist and it is already enhancing our facilities.
- Boiler repairs in Kouts are ongoing as a result of supply issues for mechanical items. We are able to keep it running on colder days, but when the weather fluctuates to warmer temps, it requires manual startup.
- Boiler starts in all branches have been completed and we are ready for the winter season.
- Stone benches were delivered for the Portage Library Garden. This simple addition is making a huge difference as more people take advantage of the outdoor space.

Technology

- Angela completed the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR). This is a thorough survey that digs into our cybersecurity policies and practices. Completing this survey has helped assess what we are currently doing to protect against cyber threats and what we can do to enhance those efforts.
- Angela has also been working with our vendors to continue with meeting room and camera upgrades.
- Nathan has been setting up a registration form for our technology one-on-one appointments.
- We are looking into a better way to manage and update the screensavers on our patron computers to advertise our events, services, and programs.
- Angela and Nathan continue to set up self-registration stations for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Community Engagement

- October is a whirlwind of fun as our community partners invite PCPLS for trunk or treats and fall festivities! This month, we attended 6 exciting events across Porter County, meeting 4,298 smiling faces. Our staff had a blast chatting with parents about the amazing resources the library has to offer and all the upcoming programs. Kids were all smiles scoring sweet treats along with their flyer full of library happenings!

- This month, the Hebron Branch was buzzing with excitement as a favorite stop during the Hebron Chamber of Commerce Business Trick or Treat! The branch welcomed 127 visitors during this spooktacular event.
- Jesse engaged at the state level with the larger library community as he was part of a library definitions committee that met to work on making meaningful changes to the Indiana Code regarding libraries. This work is ongoing and PCPLS is working to ensure the changes will positively impact libraries throughout Indiana.
- Jesse met with Bill Higbie of the Porter County Community Foundation regarding the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and the Kouts Library Garden project on funding options to support both initiatives.

Social Media Engagement

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during October was 114,111.
- Facebook:
 - 7,085 followers with a reach of 17,664.
- Twitter:
 - 607 total followers.
- Instagram:
 - 1,556 followers; 9 posts and a total of 1,324 impressions.
- YouTube:
 - 158 total subscribers; PCPLS videos had 45 views this month.
- Pinterest:
 - 84 followers with a reach of 13.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 92,159 times.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 1,001 subscribers with 2,906 total views this month.
- PCPLS' Virtual Customer Service Team interacted with 68 patrons.
- Google: 3 new five-star reviews
 - "They are ALWAYS helpful and very knowledgeable and of course friendly."
 - "Friendly employees, plenty of parking spaces, clean and well stocked."
- LibAnswers Comment:
 - "I am in all of the Porter County libraries on a weekly basis for my work as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. I find that the staff at the libraries are helpful and caring in working with library patrons and have seen first-hand staff assisting patrons with using the computer, making copies, understanding how to use their phone or just being a compassionate listener. I very much appreciate the services that the libraries provide."

Youth and Teen Services

- Ashley and Willow attended the Youth Services Fall Counterparts Meeting at the Crown Point Community Library, where Lacey Klemm, the Northwest Regional Coordinator of the Indiana State Library, presented on Developing Community Partnerships.
- Fall Fest proved to be a fantastic event for the community, with many attendees appreciating the free activities for all ages. A total of 202 participants entered the

Pumpkin Contest, with the winner receiving 91 tickets. For the Door Prizes, 327 participants took part, entering to win various bundles: the Lego Bundle garnered 202 entries, the Candle Corn Bundle attracted 93 entries, and the Top Book Bundle received 32 entries.

- The “Wish Tree” Storywalk for Portage and the “Strangers in the Woods” Storywalk for South Haven are now ready for installation.
- We concluded our last Storytime in the Park program for the year at Founders Square.
- Books, Blocks, and Balls sessions were held at the South Haven and Valparaiso branches. We received 2 additional kits to be housed at our South and North County Buildings.
- The Paws to Read program took place at the Valparaiso, Hebron, and Kouts branches, with confirmed dates scheduled for the next six months.
- The Kouts Branch recently hosted a special visit from Amazon John of Silly Safari, who brought along a variety of fascinating animals. Many children expressed their enjoyment of the armadillo and had the opportunity to hold a snake, creating an engaging and memorable experience.
- Ashley, Allison, and Elizabeth C. attended an in-person training session on New Escape Room Kits at the Crown Point Community Library, led by Suzanne Walker from the Indiana State Library.
- The teen painting program, led by Kayla L. in Hebron, continues to be very popular. This month the teens got to show how creative they could be painting their own spooky pumpkins. They can't wait to see what they will be working on next month.
- The Big Blue Blocks program was a hit in Kouts. Kids and their parents/guardians all had a lot of fun building some amazing creations. There were a lot of patrons asking when this program would happen next.
- The Kouts branch has resumed its partnership with Kouts Elementary School's art department, hosting art shows featuring student artwork. This month's theme, “My Favorite Color is You!”, allowed students to showcase their creativity through self-portraits.
- Parents and kids are eager to restart the Kouts branch book clubs this month: Emerging Readers (gr. K-2), Read BeTween the Lines (gr. 3-6), and A Likely Story (gr. 6-9). The Kouts Lion's Club will renew its partnership with these clubs starting March 2025.
- Ryana Backe, in partnership with Jobsource, has organized a small group of teen volunteers who come to the Portage branch once a week to help us with several branch projects. Our volunteers will be doing projects with us through the end of November.
- South Haven Elementary's Service Club students chose the South Haven branch to offer an hour of volunteer service. Amanda Koeppen organized a few different cleaning projects for them to help us with during their hour of service.
- Corine and Liz from the Valpo branch led a library tour for teens seeking resources for their science fair projects. This book a librarian visit showcased the library's free tools, highlighting digital resources and providing guidance on locating relevant print materials in the catalog.
- Allison at the Valpo branch created a wall display that allows patrons to easily view all of the board games and kits the library has in its collection. This has reduced a lot of the

clutter in the department and matches the board game display downstairs, allowing for a more consistent patron experience throughout the branch.

- The Youth Services team at the Valpo branch has been working with the Collection Services team to relabel character-themed picture books (Curious George, Dora, Thomas the Tank Engine, etc.) With the new labels, these books will be found on the shelf together all in the same spot instead of filed under different author names.

Adult Services

- The Fix-It Fair was a resounding success! All 40 appointments were fully booked, with 22 participants bringing in items such as clocks, tablets, fans, heaters, juicers, small tables, drones, and repaired clothing and jewelry. Additionally, passersby expressed great interest in learning when the next fair will be held.
- Lanette hosted a library visit for residents of Avalon Springs at the Valparaiso branch. Cheryl and Barb graciously opened the Friends' Booksale Room, allowing visitors to shop for books. We are excited to strengthen its partnership with Avalon Springs by offering library cards, home deliveries, tech support, and future library visits.
- The partnership between PCPLS and the League of Women Voters has successfully wrapped up its initiatives to help patrons with voter registration, confirm their registration status, and answer important questions regarding the voting process.
- The Hebron staff reorganized the upstairs space this month. The teen area was adjusted to consolidate all young adult materials in one room. Additionally, Friends Booksale items were relocated to new shelving by the AV area for better visibility and more space.
- The Kouts Book Club, led by Nancy T., and the painting program in Hebron, led by Sarah M., were both very popular programs this month.
- Bethany at the Valpo branch is now responsible for coordinating volunteers and has implemented the adopt-a-shelf system, allowing them to maintain library aisles. She also fosters a welcoming environment for the volunteer community.
- Courtney at the Valpo branch has been coordinating a backshift of the nonfiction collection. It is coming along very nicely, and the team has incorporated a few zig-zag shelves with the titles facing out. It is very eye-catching!
- Portage and South Haven book clubs voted on their 2025 book selections. Based on book club member votes, Amy K and Rachel S curated a fun list of books that our book club members should enjoy for 2025.

Collections

- PCPLS hosted the Evergreen Northwest Regional User Group with Elizabeth in attendance. The meeting gave us the opportunity to gather with our consortium colleagues for professional development. Topics included an upcoming Evergreen upgrade, Aspen, Infoexpress, and an open discussion.
- Elizabeth, Inge, and Jesse visited the Bradford showroom where they saw a demonstration of Spacesaver shelves to be installed at the Hebron branch and had a discussion with our rep about potential future projects.

- Elizabeth and Inge also hosted a group of staff members from the Jasper Public Library who had questions about joining Evergreen. We had a great discussion about the benefits and challenges of being in a consortium. We hope to count our neighbors as fellow Evergreen members in the future!
- Inge, Elizabeth, and Jesse met with a representative from IU regarding the possibility of being involved in a pilot project to create an energy lending library. We provided feedback that will hopefully help their project moving forward.

Genealogy

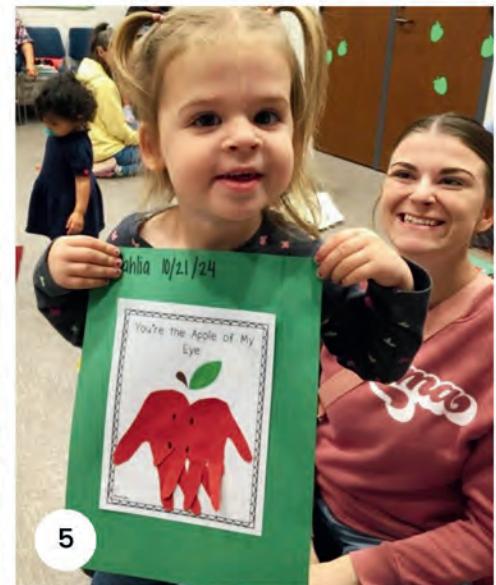
- Chris M finished indexing the Michigan City obituary cards. She has started an index of the early deed book that a volunteer abstracted before the pandemic closure. These pages may already be digitized on FamilySearch, but have not been indexed.
- Chris Hough spoke at a meeting of the Indiana Lincoln Highway Association. There were 12 attendees at the meeting on October 12.
- The Genealogy team collaborated with other PCPLS team members to provide resources for a homeschool event as well as local history information about Hebron.
- Chris Hough continues to plan for the Beginner's Genealogy Workshop that will be held on November 16th with the Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society.
- The Genealogy team verified information about a local movie house that previously was on Franklin Street, where the bank parking lot is located. It had various names, Schillings, Varsity, and Lake. In later years, organizations were able to rent the space for travel logs and private events. It was torn down before 1976.

Hebron



- 1 Our little patrons had a blast donning their costume for this spooky storytime full of tricks and treats!
- 2 This month, families unleashed their inner Picassos at our painting program.
- 3 It's time to get up and move those feet! Storytime is more than just listening to a good story, we also learn fun songs and dances.
- 4 Our teens had fun decorating pumpkins in this painting program. Each one turned out to be a quirky masterpiece, bursting with personality!
- 5 In storytime, we dove into a colorful book all about feelings! Together we discovered all the wacky ways we show how we really feel!

Kouts



- 1 Turning bricks into awesome creations with our pals at Teen Lego Club was so much fun.
- 2 Hummingbird Hannah fluttered in with a flock of fabulous friends for us to meet at the Silly Safari show! The Opposum was a fan favorite.
- 3 It's an armadillo! This little fella had everyone oohing and aahing.
- 4 Caleb the Comfort Dog is the ultimate snuggly sidekick for your reading adventures in our Paws to Read program!
- 5 This little Storytime goer is super proud of the craft she made.

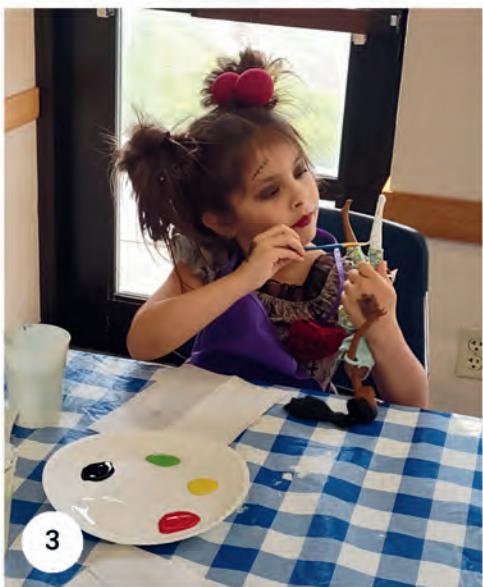
Portage



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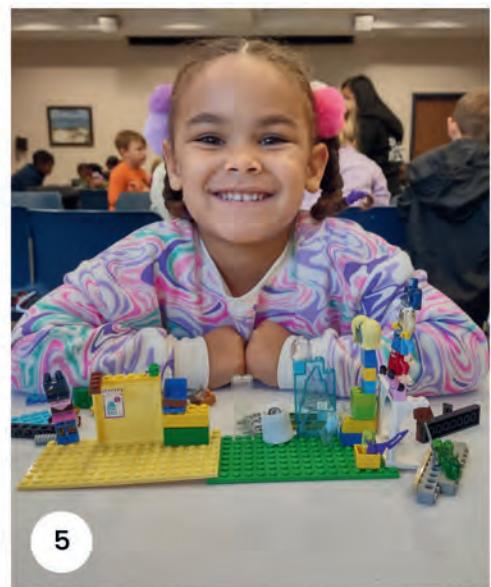
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- 1 We rolled out the welcome mat for Aylesworth Elementary's school visit!
- 2 The Painting Pumpkins program introduced us to new ways to make art and new friends.
- 3 Zombie Barbie Bash was a spooktacular time!
- 4 Painting Pumpkins was full of creative kiddos! Each one brought a splash of fun ideas and no two pumpkins looked anything like each other!
- 5 Aylesworth Elementary students turned the library into a LEGO wonderland with their epic creations!

South Haven



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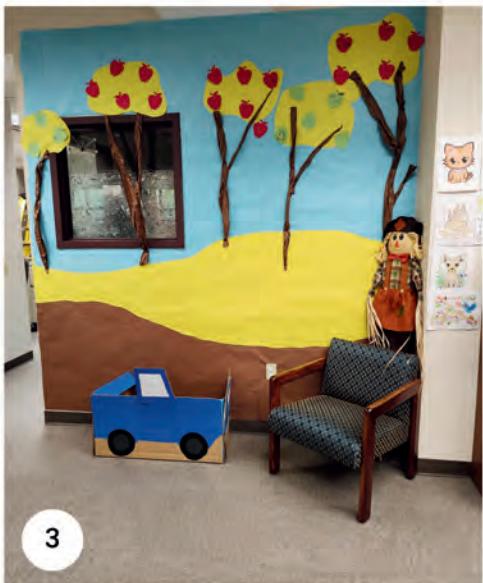
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- 1 Our spook-tacular Halloween Storytime had us shimmying and grooving in our most fabulous costumes!
- 2 Patrons of all ages love gathering in the new South Haven Library Garden for Storytime, soaking up the warm sun before winter.
- 3 The Library Garden is the perfect place for messy crafts.
- 4 Our youngest patrons learned all about the letter Y in this Storytime.
- 5 Miss Amanda and Miss Amy represented PCPLS at the annual Haven Hollow Harvest Fest.

Valparaiso



1 Babies and their caregivers enjoy playtime at Book Babies with Miss Emily!

2 These tiny tots share toys at the end of the Book Babies program.

3 Check out this new apple orchard display in Youth Services, complete with a cardboard car photo op!

4 Liz, Corine, and Kim dressed up to pass out candy and flyers at Valparaiso Downtown Trick or Treat!

5 The dollhouse at the Valparaiso Branch is gota cozy makeover with a fabulous fall theme!

in Our Community



- 1 Mother Bruce was our special guest at this year's Fall Fest! Kids lined up to give him a high-paw and take a picture together.
- 2 Fix-It Fair is a wonderful partner event with Porter County Recycling. All sorts of items get repaired so they can continue to be used and loved.
- 3 Our team brought extra magic to this year's Fall Fest at the Valpo Branch. These larger-than-life pumpkins created the perfect atmosphere for fun!
- 4 Thanks to Fix-It Fair volunteers, many patrons were able to come in and find help restoring items, from jewelry to toys.
- 5 Fall Fest was a carnival full of games and crafts for all ages.