

# footnotes

BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

May/June 2024



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451 Delaware Ave., Delmar • 518-439-9314



[www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org](http://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org)

# 2024-25 Budget

	2023-24	2024-25	Comments
<b>Salaries and benefits</b>			
Salaries	\$2,547,087	\$2,666,993	Contractual increases in salaries
Retirement	280,440	324,242	
Payroll taxes	194,865	206,465	
Health insurance	372,300	398,000	Assumes a 10% increase in January 2025
Other insurance	\$32,500	\$32,500	
Total salaries and benefits	\$3,427,192	\$3,628,200	
<b>Library materials</b>	\$575,000	\$575,000	Increases in downloadable materials and Library of Things offset by decrease in demand for CDs and DVDs
<b>Operations</b>			
Utilities	\$105,400	\$105,500	
Office supplies and expenses	58,400	58,700	
Printing and marketing	35,000	43,200	Includes potential addition of communications software
Custodial supplies	20,000	20,000	
Insurance	30,000	35,000	
Professional fees, dues and conferences	36,500	46,500	Includes attorney fees
Special programs	35,000	42,000	Increased demand for programming
Building and equip. maint.	96,000	97,000	Contractual services, building/equipment repairs
Furniture and equipment	30,000	30,000	
IT/hardware and software	50,000	50,000	
Audit and online accounting services	44,000	47,000	Audit fees and actuary fees
Online catalog/circ. system	54,000	57,500	Planned increase in library system fees
Other	11,500	11,500	
Capital improvements/contingency	135,000	135,000	
Total operations	\$740,800	\$778,900	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$4,742,992</b>	<b>\$4,982,100</b>	
<b>Income</b>			
PILOT	\$241,523	\$239,000	
State aid	26,000	26,000	
Interest income	52,000	90,000	Rates expected to be high through 2024
Miscellaneous fees	17,500	20,000	
Friends contribution	N/A	7,000	Reclassified Friends contributions from expense to income
Gifts and donations	4,000	8,000	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$341,023</b>	<b>\$390,000</b>	
<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>\$4,742,992</b>	<b>\$4,982,100</b>	5.04% increase
Minus income	341,023	390,000	
<b>Equals LEVY</b>	<b>\$4,401,969</b>	<b>\$4,592,100</b>	4.32% increase
<b>Fund balance</b>			
		\$1,350,000	Funds operations from July until taxes received in October
		3,390,380	Designated for capital expenditure and building needs in conjunction with the library's Long Range Plan
<b>TOTAL FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>\$4,390,380</b>	

Proposed levy increase: 4.32%

For additional financial information, please see the audited financial statements of Bethlehem Public Library online at [www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org/about-us/board-of-trustees](http://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org/about-us/board-of-trustees).



## A commitment to service

**THE 2024-25 BUDGET** supports Bethlehem Public Library's commitment to our community by investing in both the materials and the people that are at the heart of what we do.

**OUR SPENDING ON MATERIALS** remains steady as we continue to curate a robust physical collection while adding in-demand e-materials and digital audiobooks. Our circulation topped 640,000 items last year, with no sign of slowing down. Although spending on DVDs and audiobooks on CDs is decreasing slightly due to reduced demand, those collections aren't going away. We understand that access is important, and with streaming platforms in constant flux, we intend to have an audio/visual collection you can count on for years to come.

**THIS YEAR'S BUDGET** sees increases in the personnel line following last year's salary negotiations that recognize the contributions of all employees in providing the high level of library service our patrons deserve. These adjustments, along with a five-year labor contract, have led to stability following a challenging period of rapid post-pandemic turnover. Our part-time staff are instrumental in the library's ability to be open for 12 hours a day on the weekdays, as well as weekends, and this budget allows us to bring their pay rate into parity with their full-time counterparts. We are also incrementally increasing our contribution to the family health plan as we recognize the impact of health care expenses. As a service-driven organization, we know that happy employees provide the best service, and we are working hard to encourage and facilitate a healthy work-life balance.

**LAST YEAR WE SET OUT TO** increase the number of programs we offered to library-goers of all ages – and we did! Attendance at our events tripled, going from just over 12,000 to nearly 37,000. This year, we're devoting even more of our budget to these opportunities to promote literacy, lifelong learning and entertainment.

**OUR 2024-25 BUDGET** also reflects an increase in interest income to help offset new expenses, with rates expected to remain high through the end of the year.

**AS A LIBRARY**, we are dedicated to providing our community the highest level of access and service, and we believe the 2024-25 budget will allow us to do that. On the ballot this year is a levy of \$4.59 million, which is 4.32% higher than last year, within the limit specified by New York State.

— Bethlehem Public Library Board of Trustees

### Meet the Candidates

Wednesday May 8 • 6pm

*The candidates seeking the three available seats on the library's Board of Trustees will introduce themselves and talk about why they are running.*

### Budget review

Monday May 13 • 6pm

*An introduction of the 2024-25 library budget will take place prior to the regular board meeting.*

### Budget/trustee vote

Tuesday May 21 • 7am-9pm

*Vote takes place at Bethlehem Central High School.*

## footnotes

May/June 2024

Kristen Roberts, editor/staff writer

### Trustees

Mark Kissinger, *president*  
Michelle Walsh, *vice president*  
Charmaine Wijeyesinghe, *vice president*  
Caroline Brancatella, *secretary*  
Lisa Scoons, *trustee, UHLS board*  
Laura DiBetta, *trustee*  
Sarah Patterson, *trustee*  
Sharon Whiting, *board treasurer*

### Director

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick

### Library board

- Monday May 13 • 6pm
- Monday June 10 • 6pm

### Friends board

- Monday June 17 • 6:30pm

### Library hours

weekdays 9-9 • Saturdays 10-5  
Sundays 12-5

### Holiday hours

- May 25-27 CLOSED: *Memorial Day Weekend*
- June 19 CLOSED: *Juneteenth*
- July 4 CLOSED: *Independence Day*

### Contact us

- 518-439-9314
- information@bethlehempublib.org
- trustees@bethlehempublib.org

### Visit our website

bethlehempublib.org

*The footnotes newsletter is published six times a year and mailed to all households in the Bethlehem Central School District.*





Chalk Art  
on the Plaza  
June 30

## Upcoming author talks

Get to know some of your favorite authors and enjoy Q&A opportunities through virtual author talks available exclusively to Bethlehem cardholders. Visit [libraryc.org/bethlehempubliibrary](http://libraryc.org/bethlehempubliibrary) for more information, to register for upcoming talks or to view past discussions.

### Coming up in May/June:

**May 1 • 3pm: Douglas Brunt**, New York Times bestselling author of "Ghosts of Manhattan"

**May 8 • 7pm: Nina Simon**, Reese's Book Club Pick for "Mother-Daughter Murder Night"

**May 21 • 7pm: Rebecca F. Kuang**, bestselling author of "Yellowface" and "Babel"

**June 13 • 8pm: Freida McFadden**, author of psychological thrillers and practicing physician

## All ages

### Show caring with cranes

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month. In an effort to reduce stigma and encourage a sense of community, we are hoping to fold 1,000 cranes for mental health during the month. In honor of those we have lost, those who have suffered, and those who continue to suffer from mental illnesses, please join us **beginning May 1** by folding an origami paper crane to add to an installation that will be displayed in the Children's Place. Hands-on instruction will be provided **May 3 and May 31** from **3:45-4:45pm**.

#### Board Game Café

Thursday May 30 • 6-8pm

Join us for a fun, free night of board games at the library. Come as a group, or come ready to make new friends! Food and drink will be provided.

#### Competitive Puzzling

Sunday June 9 • 2pm

Work solo or in a group to see who can solve their puzzle fastest to win a prize.

#### Saturday Matinee: 'Hook'

Saturday June 29 • 2pm

In this week's movie (1991, PG, 145 min.), a workaholic lawyer remembers he was once Peter Pan and is forced to rediscover his inner-child to rescue his children.

#### Chalk Art on the Plaza

Sunday June 30 • 2-3pm

Help brighten up our plaza with chalk art. We'll provide the chalk, you provide the art.

## A day to celebrate comic books

Free Comic Book Day is all about putting comic books in the hands of people who might not read them. Come see what's so cool about comics **Saturday May 4** as we celebrate the day with freebies and activities from **11am-4pm** in the Children's Place and Teen Area. Then join us for an all-ages screening of "The Marvels" (PG-13, 105 min.) at **2pm** in the Community Room.

## Adults

#### Getting Ahead of Your Gmail Inbox

Thursday May 2 • 6:30pm

Is your gmail inbox overwhelming you? Are you having a hard time sorting your important emails from spam? Sign up to learn some tips and tricks for making it easier to sort and navigate your email.

#### Bethlehem Film Club

Sunday May 5 • 2pm

Enjoy an old favorite or a movie you have never seen. Connect with others to discern the meaning behind the stories on the silver screen. **Teens welcome!**

#### Mental Health Check: Digital Detox

Monday May 6 • 6:30pm

In this program, you'll learn how to best start a digital detox, tips for maintaining a digital detox, how to have a healthy relationship with your phone, and more. **Teens welcome!**

*continued*

 sign up: [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](http://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) |  program is virtual

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## Adults *(continued)*

### This prom is the bee's knees 🐝

A little party never killed nobody! Bethlehem Senior Services, Bethlehem Senior Projects Inc., and the library are hosting a Roaring '20s themed Seniors Prom **Friday May 24 from 1-3pm** at Bethlehem Town Hall. Dress as a gangster or silent screen star, come as a flapper or come as you are!

We'll be dancing up a storm, listening to Annie and the Hedonists, and serving refreshments to take us back to a time of freewheeling fun and art deco decadence.

Reservations are required to save your spot and/or arrange for transportation. **Please call (518) 439-4955, ext. 1176 to sign up.**

#### Book Page Bouquets 📖

Thursday May 9 • 6:30pm

Participants will be given a tutorial on making flowers from book pages and will get to make their own bouquet. Pages will be provided, but feel free to bring your own. **Teens welcome!**

#### Listen and Learn: Adirondack Place Names

Friday May 10 • 10am

Come learn about the Adirondack Mountains and discover the meaning behind the names of places found there.

#### Craft & Color for Adults

Monday May 13 • 11am

Monday June 17 • 11am

Choose between coloring or doing an open-ended craft activity. This program is specifically designed for adults of all abilities.

#### Tech Tuesday: Get to know the Studio Makerspace 📺

Tuesday May 14 • 10am

Have you ever wondered what kind of technology we have available in the library's Studio Makerspace? Join us for a brief introduction over Zoom to the different types of equipment available, learn how to reserve a time slot, and ask any questions you might have.

#### Trivia Night

Tuesday May 14 • 7pm

Compete individually or in teams for bragging rights in this general trivia event.

#### Midday Tech: Introduction to Apple Devices 📖

Wednesday May 22 • noon

We'll go over the basics of using an Apple device — phone and tablet. This will include device buttons, touch screen, Wi-Fi, internet use and downloading apps.

#### Spice Sharing: Sumac 📖

Thursday May 23 • 6:30pm

Prior to the program, sign up to pick up a sample packet of the spice along with a few recipes that feature it. Then meet to discuss your experience and share recipes.

#### It's Time to Talk: Dementia Conversations

Wednesday May 29 • 10am

This program offers tips on how to have honest and caring conversations to address some of the most common issues. Topics covered include: going to the doctor, deciding when to stop driving, and making legal and financial plans.

*continued*

## Book Discussions

### Day Books

**Mondays at 1:30pm**

**May 6**

*Olga Dies Dreaming*  
by Xóchitl González

**June 3**

*The Island of Missing Trees*  
by Elif Shafak

### Dark Corners Book Group 📖

**Wednesdays at 7pm**

**May 15**

*Sundial* by Catriona Ward

**June 12**

*Murder at Teal's Pond* by David Bushman  
and Mark T. Givens

### Based on the Novel — a book-to-screen discussion 📺

**Mondays at 7pm**

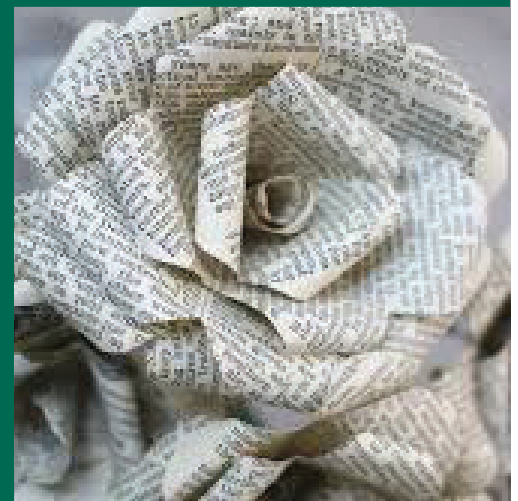
**May 20**

*Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro

**June 24**

*A Single Man* by Christopher Isherwood

*New members welcome. Copies are available at the information desk. Audio, large print and downloadable copies may be available.*



### Book Page Bouquets 📖 May 9

📖 sign up: [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](https://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) | 📺 program is virtual

518-439-9314 • [www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org](https://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org)

May/June 2024

'Bridgerton' high tea **S**  
June 11



Recipe swap **S**  
June 17



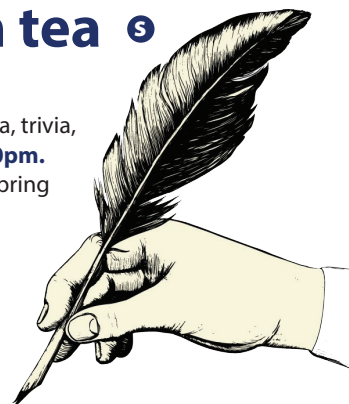
## Adults *(continued)*

### A 'Bridgerton' high tea **S**

*Dearest Gentle Reader,*

You are cordially invited to a night of high tea, trivia, gossip and frivolity on **Tuesday June 11 at 6:30pm**. Lace-up those corsets, sharpen your quills, and bring your embroidery if you so desire as we revel in the first half of "Bridgerton," season three, and speculate what is in store for the remaining episodes.

*Yours Truly,  
Lady Whistledown*



### National Senior Health and Fitness Day **S**

Wednesday May 29 • noon

Join us at the Elm Avenue Town Park Pavilion, where we'll have all kinds of information about our upcoming summer programs. Stop by and say hello!

### Community Yoga

Wednesday May 29 • 6pm

Wednesday June 26 • 6pm

Enjoy a class designed for all skill levels. Dan May shares Jai Yoga School's Bhakti yoga practice, which includes song, cultural information and stories.

### A Parent's Guide to Digital Content for Kids **S**

Monday June 3 • 7pm

A librarian will discuss all of the digital content available for children through Libby, Kanopy, Hoopla and more. This virtual program takes place over Zoom.

### Downsizing & Organizing

Monday June 10 • 10am

A representative from Organize Senior Moves will present some organizing tips, and be available to talk you through tackling the toughest of projects.

### Pressed Flower Candle Holders **S**

Monday June 10 • 6pm

With summer around the corner, join us at the library to create the perfect seasonal outdoor lighting. All supplies will be provided. **Teens welcome!**

### Bethlehem Film Club

Sunday June 16 • 2pm

Enjoy an old favorite or a movie you have never seen. Connect with others to discern the meaning behind the stories on the silver screen. **Teens welcome!**

### Recipe Swap: Summer Salads **S**

Monday June 17 • 6:30pm

Come to share your favorite recipes, and get some new recipe inspiration to take home.

### Introduction to Microsoft Excel **S**

Sunday June 23 • 2pm

This hands-on workshop is designed for beginners who are interested in seeing what Excel can do. We will introduce basic data entry techniques and then use Excel to create a simple budget spreadsheet and line graphs.

*continued*

**S** sign up: [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](https://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) | **V**: program is virtual

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## Adults *(continued)*

### Monday Matinee: 'The Maltese Falcon'

Monday June 24 • 2pm

Enjoy the 1941 noir classic, featuring Academy Award winner Humphrey Bogart as tough San Francisco private detective Sam Spade.

## Tweens and Teens

### Teen Hangout

Wednesday May 1 • 3:30pm

Wednesday June 5 • 3:30pm

Come to the library after school for board games, crafts, homework help and good vibes. Listen to music, watch a cozy TV show and eat some snacks while you hang out with friends! **For grades 6 and up.**

### Anime Club

Tuesdays May 7-June 18 • 3:30pm

Watch anime (and eat snacks) with other teens. Whether you are an otaku or a curious newbie, everyone is welcome. Videos will be rated PG-13 or lower; shows TV-14 or lower.

### Bethlehem Library Teens (BLT)

Wednesday May 8 • 3:45pm

Wednesday June 12 • 3:45pm

This is a time and space for teens to relax together, have a snack and chat about what the library can do for teens in our community. More video games? Bean bags? More teen programming? To stop calling you teens? This is your chance to get involved and tell us what you want! **For grades 6 and up.**

### Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Afternoon

Friday May 10 • 3:45pm

Join your friends to play Super Smash Bros. Ultimate on the Nintendo Switch!

**For grades 6 and up.**

### Magic: The Gathering Tournament **S**

Sunday May 12 • noon-5pm

We will have several formats to compete in. Compete as an individual or as a team for fun and prizes. **For grades 6-12.**

## Kids and families

### Thank You Teacher Flower Pots **S**

Wednesday May 1 • 6pm

Show your teacher some appreciation by decorating a special flowerpot just for them! **For grades K and up.**

### Chess Club **S**

Mondays May 6-May 20 • 5:30pm OR 6:30pm

Sign up for one session per night and try your hand at chess with peers or teen volunteers. All experience levels welcome. **For grades K-5.**

*continued*

## 'The Maltese Falcon'

June 24



### Bethlehem Library Teens



Your library. Your ideas. Your voice.



## Study hall @ the library June 2024

Group-study space  
for Regents exams

Schedule available  
in the library and online at  
[www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org](http://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org).

**S** sign up: [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](http://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) | **V**: program is virtual

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May/June 2024

## Kids and families (continued)

### Paws to Read

Monday May 13 • 4-5pm

Monday June 3 • 4-5pm

Monday June 17 • 4-5pm

Come to the library and practice reading skills with a registered therapy dog who will listen calmly and quietly. **For grades K-5.**

### DIY Balloon Rocket

Tuesday May 14 • 4pm

Learn about high and low air pressure and how to control the trajectory of a balloon. Try different builds and see if yours can pass the finish line. **For ages 6-11.**

### Nurturing Nature

Thursday May 23 • 4-5pm

Come join students from Bethlehem High School Environmental Club who will read fun books related to the environment followed by a craft activity that emphasizes recycling and reusing materials. **For ages 6-11.**

### K.I.N.D Club

Saturday June 1 • 3pm

K.I.N.D stands for "Kids Identified (or see themselves) as Neuro Divergent." Kids who fit that description, plus their friends and families, are invited to have fun and make connections at the library. Each month there will be various activities to choose from. **For grade K and up. Tweens and Teens welcome!**

### Page-to-Screen Book Club: 'InkHeart'

Wednesday June 26 • 2pm

Read the book (copies at the library), come to the library to watch the movie and then join in the group discussion. **For ages 8 and up.**

### Travel Thursdays

Thursday June 27 • 10am

Grab your passports and pack your bags for a trip across the globe through story. **Best suited for ages 5 and up with caregiver.**



Chess Club   
Mondays May 6-20

## Creation Station

Monday-Friday 9:30am-8:30pm

May 6-12 — Darling Dragonflies

June 3-9 — Origami Bookmarks

All supplies provided!

## Thursdays in the Park

The library has once again teamed up with Bethlehem Town Parks and Recreation to offer a family-friendly series of events **every Thursday at 6pm from June 6-August 15**. Most shows will take place at Elm Avenue Park in Bethlehem unless otherwise noted. Visit [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](http://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) for details about the performers. *This series is co-sponsored by Friends of Bethlehem Public Library. All ages welcome!*

### June 6: Heard

Heard's vibrant sound takes influences from West Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean and beyond!

### June 13: Tom Sieling


Children and adults alike will laugh and sing along with this family favorite.

### June 20: Flame

Renowned local rock band spreads hope and inspiration through their music.

### June 27: Jester Jim

This is not your ordinary juggling show! With a trunk full of props and a looping machine, you will be glued to every sight and sound.



Thursdays in the Park  
June 6-August 15



 sign up: [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](http://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) |  program is virtual

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# Storytimes and more

## Family Story Time

Wednesdays May 1-22 • 10am

Stories, songs and more. \*Space limited on May 15. **For ages 0-6 with caregiver.**

## Family Play Time

Wednesdays May 1-22 • 11am

Free play and socialization with a variety of toys. \*Space limited on May 15.

**For ages 0-6 with caregiver.**

## Music and Movement

Tuesdays May 7-21 • 11am

Thursdays May 2-23 • 10am

Songs, dancing, learning and fun. **For ages 0-6 with caregiver.**

## Preschool Story Time

Thursdays May 2-23 • 11am

Join us for stories, learning and fun. **For ages 2-6 with caregiver.**

## Saturday Story Time

Saturday May 4 • 11am

Saturday May 11 • 11am

Stories, songs and more. **For ages 0-6 with caregiver.**

## Tiny Tots

Tuesdays May 7-21 • 10am

Songs, dancing, learning and fun. **For children up to 35 months with caregiver.**

## Animal Hospital

Wednesday May 29 • 3pm

Bring in your favorite stuffed friend for a check-up and work on a craft while you wait. With the assistance of the Helping Hands Club from BCMS, children will learn how a visit to a doctor's office or veterinarian's office might go.

**For up to age 5 with a caregiver.**

## Sensory Story Time and Play

Friday May 31 • 10am

Traditional story time components blended with sensory elements for a gentler, more low-key story time. **For ages 2 and up with caregiver.**

## Sensory Play Time

Friday June 7 • 10am

Stop by for open-ended play with our various sensory items including Play-Doh, squishy liquid tiles and more. **For ages 2 and up with caregiver.**

## Dinosaur Dance

Tuesday June 18 • 10am

Join us on the Green for a roar-ing good time as we dance and march around and pretend to be dinosaurs, followed by a dinosaur hunt and a craft. **For ages 2 and up with caregiver.**

## Pride Month Celebration

Friday June 21 • 10am

We'll share stories and songs, dance around with balloons, and make some fabulous crafts! **For ages 3 and up and families.**

## Baby Bounce

Tuesday June 25 • 10am

Talk, read, sing and play together during this special edition of story time. **For ages 0-18 months and caregivers.**

### Parents, please note:

All abilities are welcome. No signup is required unless noted, but space is limited and story times begin promptly. There may be a limited capacity for each session. When Bethlehem schools are closed or delayed, all story times are cancelled.

## Literacy tip

Pretend play helps children think symbolically and develop oral language skills. As children play store, they talk about what they are doing. They practice putting thoughts into words.

## Animal Hospital May 29



## Pride Month Celebration June 21



 sign up: [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](https://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) |  program is virtual

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# Summer reading 2024

## Let's read this summer!

The Summer Reading program at Bethlehem Public Library is not only a fun way to explore new stories through activities and cool rewards, it is also a great way to help you stay on top of the knowledge picked up during the school year so you can hit the ground running in fall.

The library's 2024 Summer Reading theme, *Adventure Begins at your Library*, encourages everyone to see where their reading journey will take them. When you sign up for the library's Summer Reading Challenge, you will track your progress through challenge cards for a chance to earn book prizes. You can also join us for themed programs all summer long. Check out the calendar at [bethlehem.librarycalendar.com](http://bethlehem.librarycalendar.com) to see what's coming up!

**Registration for Summer Reading begins June 24** and can be done online at [bethply14.readsquared.com](http://bethply14.readsquared.com). The Summer Reading Challenge can be completed online. Once you sign up, you can start checking off your reading milestones right away!

We'll be getting the adventure started on the Green **Friday June 28** with two performances by **Jumpin' Jamie**, a "kindie" rock musician whose high-energy shows feature a little bit of everything — music, puppets, magic!

The first performance at **11am** is geared toward preschool-aged children and will jumpstart their reading journey with interactive music, play and tons of fun!

A second performance at **2pm** for older children will feature Indiana Jamie and his Adventures in Reading. Join Jamie on an expedition using magic, puppets and music to cover letters, words and spelling, sentence and story structure, genres of books, and more.

Get ready for a summer adventure at the library!



# ADVENTURE BEGINS AT YOUR LIBRARY™



**Jumpin' Jamie**  
**June 28**

## Summer Reading bookmark contest

Open to all ages!

Entry forms available  
beginning June 24.



Winners will be announced  
in late September.



# Library building proposal

## Planning for the future

**YOU MAY HAVE HEARD** that the library is putting the final touches on an approximate \$35 million building proposal that has been years in the making. Many thoughtful hours have been dedicated to this process, beginning with the library's Master Planning Report, which was based on community feedback from surveys and focus groups before and after the pandemic.

**WE HEARD YOU** say that you valued the library's physical collection and desired more meeting and private study spaces of various sizes. Also high on the list of priorities was a desire for imaginative children's and teen spaces. The plan that will come before you in a public vote, expected in Fall 2024, balances all of these goals without sacrificing shelf space.

**THE PROPOSAL WILL** also include updates to the space based on real-world data that show how the library is actually being used. The current library building is more than 50 years old and hasn't had any changes to its footprint in that time, despite seeing more than double the circulation since it opened in the early 1970s. Our physical collection has also grown as much as it can within the confines of a set footprint, with our digital holdings almost doubling the number of materials we can offer to borrowers. A busy library requires adequate staff to provide services, and our 70-plus employees are making the best of a space that was intended for approximately 20.

**A LACK OF SPACE** has also affected the programming we are able to offer. In recent years, we've had to turn families away from our story times and popular children's events due to exceeding the capacity of our large meeting room. Our programs in partnership with the Bethlehem Historical Association frequently reach the maximum reservation long before the actual event. This is why our building plan includes a space that would more than double our capacity for large events. The largest configuration of the community room would be available primarily for library programs, but the adjustable nature of the space would allow more access for community groups requesting rooms that hold 30-35 people, which are currently in high demand and booked many months out.

**OTHER STRUCTURAL CHANGES** would improve accessibility by bringing the entrance closer to the parking lot and adding a dedicated curbside pickup and drop off service. The board has also chosen to invest in the sustainability of this community by pursuing a geothermal heating and cooling system. This would benefit the neighborhood by cutting down on mechanical noise and removing the need for unsightly rooftop units. Any building updates will be made while the library remains open to the public.

**THROUGH ALL OF THIS**, we plan to continue expanding our collection based on our increasing circulation, 30% of which is in digital materials. We know the physical collection is our bread and butter, even as we add new ways to borrow library items through Libby, Hoopla and Kanopy.

**WE REALIZE THAT** the scope of this building proposal is large – it is a once-in-50-years ask – and we have carefully considered what this community is looking for in order to put this plan together. Ultimately, you, as voters, will decide whether this proposal meets your expectations. Rest assured, the one thing that won't change in the next 50 years is our dedication to providing library services in all its forms to the people of this community. You will always be at the heart of what we do today and decades into the future.

*Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director, Bethlehem Public Library*

### Project updates

For up-to-date developments on the building plan proposal, please visit [bethpl.org/building-project-update](http://bethpl.org/building-project-update).



### Community Feedback Session: BPL Building Project

**Tuesday May 7 • 2-3:30pm AND 6:30-8pm**

*This is an opportunity for the public to ask questions regarding the building project. The architect firm, library staff and board members will be on hand to answer questions.*





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## What's new?

### Friends Book Sale Fundraiser

Make space on your bookshelves and stock up on some new-to-you books and DVDs this spring at the Friends of Bethlehem Public Library's Book Sale fundraiser on the library plaza **Saturday May 18 from 10am-4pm**. If raining, the sale will move inside to the Community Room. For sale will be books, CDs, DVDs and audiobooks that have been removed from the library collection and are in excellent condition. Many are duplicate copies of popular titles, and large print titles will be available.

**Pricing is cash-only by suggested donation; the Friends will not be able to make change.**

Enjoy some live music while you shop with the following performers:

- **11am-noon:** The Musicats Quartet
- **1-2pm:** The Rumble Kings

**NEW THIS YEAR:** The Friends Book Sale Committee will be accepting book donations from the public on **Friday May 17 from 10:30am-2:30pm** outside the library garage. Donations must be undamaged books no older than 10 years. The Friends will not be accepting donations of magazines or periodicals, games, puzzles, VHS or cassette tapes, CDs, or DVDs.



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