

Lorain Public Library System

Annual Report 2021



LorainPublicLibrary.org

Lorain Public
Library!
System



VISION STATEMENT:
We are the catalyst for personal and community growth, discovery, and success.

OUR MISSION:
Connecting our communities to experiences that enrich, empower, and inspire every day.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

While the world was not quite “back to normal” in 2021, Lorain Public Library System was back to “library normal;” meaning that we were able to keep our branches open and continue our practice of observing what was happening in our communities, anticipate the needs that would arise and provide services and resources in response.

When limited vaccination appointments were slowly rolling out based on age and specific health criteria, the LPLS staff assisted anyone who needed help determining eligibility and finding and booking an appointment. Our staff manned the phones for weeks, working hand in hand with Lorain County Public Health to constantly update the list of eligibility requirements and available vaccination locations. Overall, we assisted in the booking of 3,385 appointments.

As the pandemic tide began to roll out over the summer, we were happy to see an increase in participation over the previous year in our Summer Reading Program, with a total of 2,800 participants. There were 1,052 families who participated together, as well as 737 adults aged 19 and over, 237 teens, 1,281 school-age kids and 545 aged 5 and below.

When some children in our community were without a school lunch, LPLS served 1,075 meals to students as part of the Summer Food Service Program. Due to the mask mandate, these were done as a “brown bag lunch” style where the kids took the lunches home along with a fun at-home activity to enjoy.

Speaking of activities, our branches offered over 12,000 free “Grab & Go” activity bags for patrons to enjoy at home. These began when we were closed in 2020 but continued in 2021 due to popularity.

Also continuing to rise in popularity in 2021 was the catalog of resources offered 24/7 in our eLibrary. Hoopla Digital reported an additional 492 registered LPLS users in 2021. OverDrive reported LPLS patrons read a staggering 63,974 books in 2021.

Later in the year, when home COVID-19 test kits became available, LPLS continually ordered and distributed and ordered and distributed...ultimately handing out over 20,000 free tests.

These are but a few things that happened in 2021. Each individual branch has shared more on the pages within.

As librarians and those that work in other areas of library service, we always love what we do. But it is in times like those we have endured over the past two years that we are also proud, humbled and grateful.

Thank you for your continued support of Lorain Public Library System.

Sincerely,

Anastasia Diamond-Ortiz

Anastasia Diamond-Ortiz
Director





ABOUT THE LORAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Lorain Public Library System, or LPLS, is the largest, most comprehensive library system in Lorain County, Ohio, with much of its service area comprising the northeast part of the county. The estimated population in the library system’s service district is over 154,000. It serves both large and small communities, boasting a diverse patronage consisting of various economic, ethnic and educational backgrounds, with our Main Library sitting in the heart of downtown Lorain, the International City.

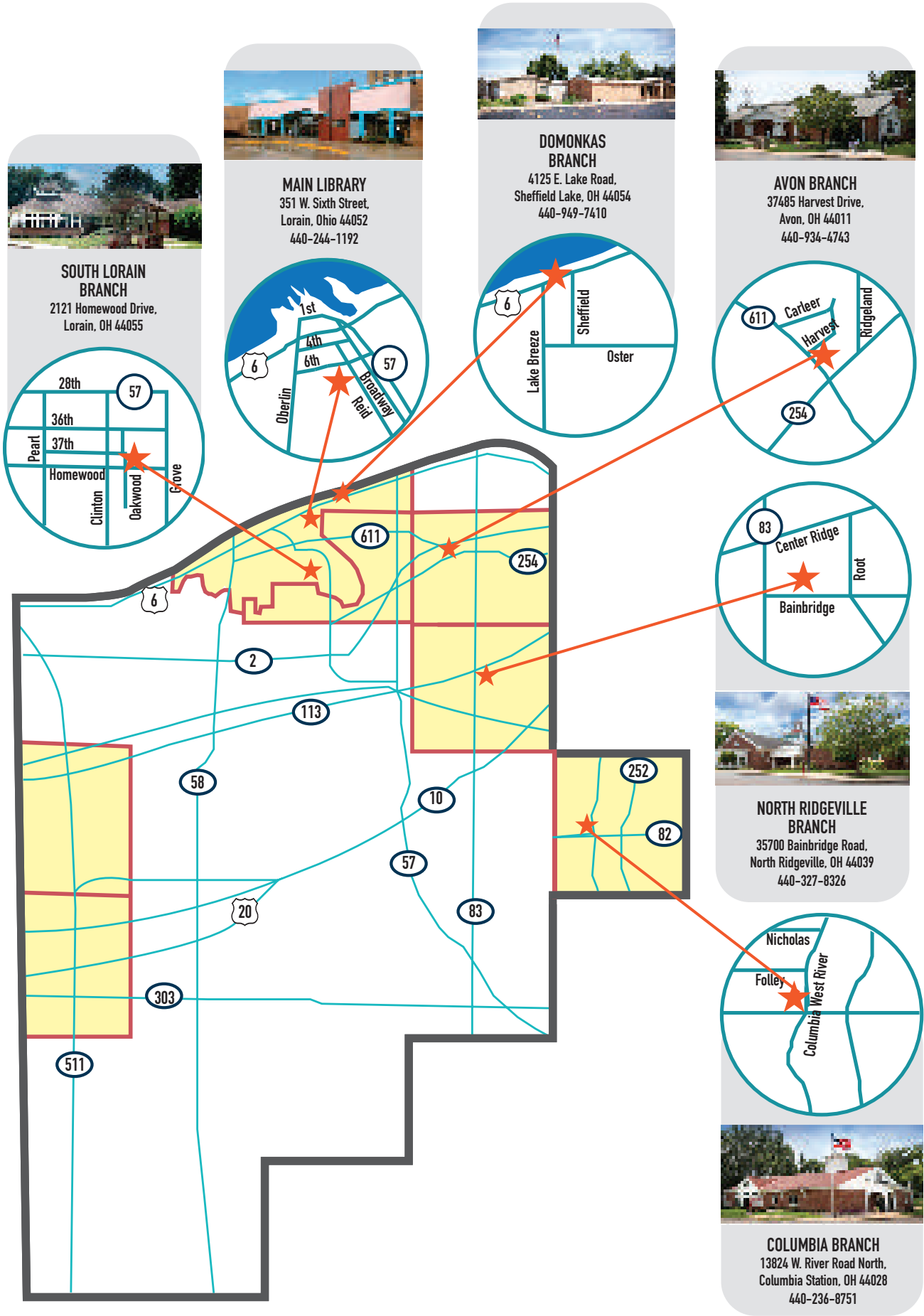
Library services are provided from six branches in Lorain, Avon, Columbia Station, North Ridgeville and Sheffield Lake. Additionally, LPLS has a Little Library

on the Lake at Lakeview Park in Lorain and Outreach Services, which include a Books by Mail program and an extensive array of eServices available on our website.

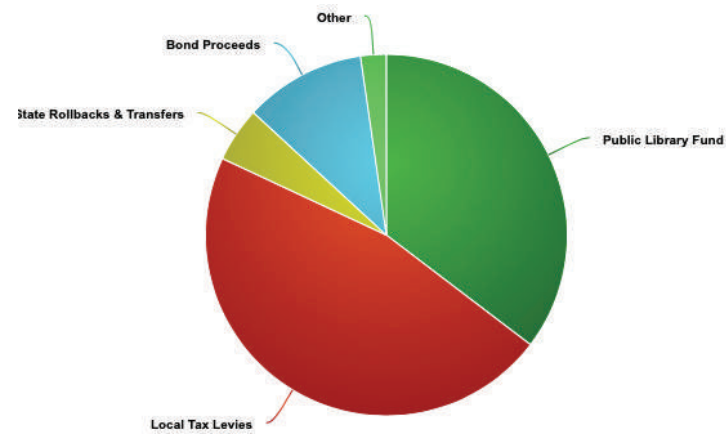
School districts in the service area include Lorain City Schools, Avon Local Schools, Clearview Local Schools, Columbia Local Schools, Firelands Local Schools, North Ridgeville City Schools and Sheffield-Sheffield Lake City Schools.

Lorain Public Library System provides everyone with free, educational, informational and entertainment resources through responsive quality service to support lifelong learning.

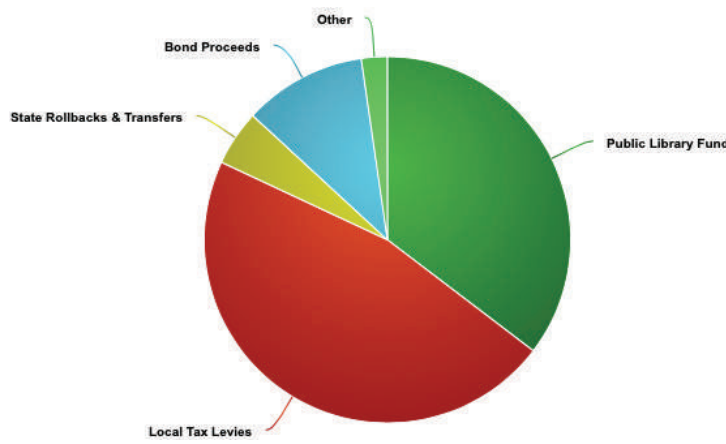
LPLS LOCATIONS



2021 Financials



REVENUE SOURCE DOLLARS	DOLLAR AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL
Public Library Fund	\$4,887,893.00	35.4%
Local Tax Levies	\$6,441,491.00	46.6%
State Rollbacks & Transfers	\$678,201.00	4.9%
Bond Proceeds	\$1,500,000.00	10.9%
Other	\$314,973.00	2.2%
Total Revenues	\$13,822,558.00	100.0%



EXPENDITURES	DOLLAR AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL
Library Materials	\$1,112,202.00	10.50%
Personnel	\$4,866,173.00	46.10%
Capital	\$2,650,512.00	25.10%
Contracts	\$1,715,393.00	16.30%
Supplies	\$209,128.00	2.00%
Total Revenues	\$10,553,408.00	100.0%

2021 ELIBRARY STATISTICS

243,602	243,602 eBook, digital audiobooks, video storybooks (OverDrive, Hoopla Digital, Bookflix)
8,361	8,361 Digital magazines (OverDrive, Consumer Reports)
13,927	Digital movies and television (Hoopla Digital, Kanopy, Access Video on Demand, Acorn TV)
2,068	2,068 Streaming music (Hoopla Digital)
29,498	Online education course enrollment (Gale Courses, Knowledge City, LinkedIn Learning, Tutor.com)
5,116	African American Heritage and Ancestry
15,120	15,120 New York Times, Newsbank, Wall Street Journal
117	117 Creativebug

2021 SYSTEM STATISTICS

- 310,735 Library visits
- 18,304 Open hours
- 66,095 Library cardholders
- 6,750 New library cards issued
- 855 Programs offered
- 30,018 In-person program attendance
- 23,400 Virtual program attendance
- 311,180 Materials owned
- 1,134,034 Materials loaned (not including eMedia)
- 324,658 Total digital circulation
- 42,381 New materials
- 52,155 Computer bookings
- 90,921 Website users
- 4,540 Facebook followers
- 1,826 Twitter followers
- 1,129 Instagram followers
- 103 TikTok followers



Donna Kelly-Sprinkle
Manager

“Seeing the smiles on people’s faces as they see the construction activity makes me proud of the work that we are putting in to make this a reality for the Avon Community who supported this project with a levy passage.”



AVON BRANCH

A groundbreaking ceremony was held, and construction began on the renovation and expansion of the Avon Branch. The project will include renovations and a 16,000 square foot addition to accommodate a reading garden, drive-up window, expanded meeting rooms, technology upgrades and a dedicated space for children and youth programming.

The Lorain County Metro Parks Miller Nature Preserve has welcomed us into their facility to host programs for children and their caregivers. Working with park staff, we offer a monthly nature-themed story time and hike program. During the colder months we switched to indoor activities.

We got out into the community by participating in the citywide Halloween event, the holiday tree lighting event and the annual Avon Branch Library Day at the Avon Pool, which offers free admission for the day by showing an LPLS library card. We host Swim Break Story Times there throughout the summer and also a Story Time in the Woods next door at Every Child’s Playground.



COLUMBIA BRANCH

A StoryWalk, dedicated to Marilyn Fetchet, longtime Columbia Branch Childrens Librarian, was installed in the park next door, and officially opened on July 12. Since its opening, the StoryWalk has been enjoyed by people of all ages who visit and walk in the park, including many library patrons who also attend family and children’s programming.

A regular patron to the branch donated hundreds of packages of flower and vegetable seeds and a customized seed packet holder to prominently display at the branch. Dozens of patrons took advantage of the offering of free seeds for their gardens, and staff received many positive compliments on the service. The Friends of the Columbia Library expressed interest in supporting the seed bank service in the future and discussed working with local businesses in the community to supply seeds in 2022.

The branch had over 200 participants in the Pokémon Trainer Walk on a Saturday in September. Patrons of all ages were given special “swag” from Niantic, the software company that created the Pokémon Go mobile gaming app, who partnered with us on this program.

Throughout summer, the branch partnered with the Berea Animal Rescue Fund, located in Columbia Station, on a program called “Reading to the Rescues,” in which a family could sign up and read stories to rescue cats. The Berea ARF was also the recipient of donations from Columbia Branch patrons from the animal shelter donation drive that all branches participated in during the month of June.



John Guscott
Manager

“The library received a personalized “Thank You” letter from the Columbia Baptist Church, reading, in part, ‘This is to let you know THANK YOU and we offer special prayers for your health and safety as you continue to care for us and the community.’ It was a welcome message during the COVID-19 crisis.”



Anne Godec
Manager

“Domonkas received tremendous support from the community when the library was on the ballot in May. The levy passed with just over 81 percent of the vote, which was a record passage rate!”



DOMONKAS BRANCH

The refresh of the Domonkas Branch continued in 2021 with a new information desk, new tables and chairs, new paint and carpet and the rearranging of shelving and collections. We also added a new monitor, camera, speakers and a story time media cart to assist with virtual and hybrid programming.

We saw an increase in programs using our Charlie Cart, which is an all-in-one mobile demonstration kitchen. The programs introduced patrons to new foods and the ways to prepare them as well as presented healthier alternatives to more common dishes. We had been already providing food for those in need through our Summer Lunches and Food and Fun programs, and by expanding our programming, we moved beyond giving away food to helping people help themselves.

Domonkas was proud to continue its annual MLK Month of Service drive in January, collecting 387 donated blankets, hats, scarves and gloves, many of them hand-made by the local knitters and crocheters in the community. The donations went to a new partner, St. Elizabeth Center in Lorain, a shelter for the homeless, hungry, and in need.



MAIN LIBRARY

The Hope For Futures Urban Farm thrived in 2021, allowing us to host several pop-up “Pick Your Own Veggie” events for the community, present Farm to Table programs in the Culinary Literacy Center to highlight healthy recipes made with fresh vegetables, partner with the Rising Titans Early Literacy Collaborative to present a program and story time for preschoolers and their families at the farm as well as have Second Harvest’s Nutrition Coordinator present a program on fall squash.

We forged new partnerships with Pathways Enrichment Center to offer a series of “Family Food for Thought” classes for their Pathways Plate initiative, and with Solidarity Urban Farms who donated produce for programs and library patrons.

Our annual Winterwear Share drive continues to grow. Thanks to the generosity of Stocker Foundation funding for Operation WARM coats, and to the donations of community members at all of our branches, we were able to gift over 500 coats and accompanying hats, gloves and scarves to 87 local families. In addition, we provided a health and wellness information packet containing literature and goodies from our culinary literacy initiative at LPLS and community partners Lorain County Health and Dentistry, Lorain County Public Health, Second Harvest and Lorain County Metro Parks. Over 70% of participants surveyed said they now intend to use their library as a health information resource.

This year also saw the addition of a Telehealth Room at the Main Library where community members can speak with their healthcare providers in a safe environment without having to find transportation to the clinic or hospital, and a StoryWalk® at Black River Landing in Lorain where families can get fresh air and exercise while also enjoying a story together.



Susan Spivey
Manager

“Vegetables harvested from our urban farm were frequently made available in the library for anyone to take and our regular patrons were very receptive and appreciative.”



Jennifer Winkler
Manager

“The North Ridgeville Branch partnered with the American Red Cross to host five blood drives. Registrations were full at each, and we averaged a ninety-five percent attendance rate. It was gratifying seeing community members support each other especially when blood levels remain at critically low levels.”



NORTH RIDGEVILLE BRANCH

With funds provided by the North Ridgeville Heart and Sole Collaborative, we purchased a three-speed Sun Adult Trike to expand our bike share program. The adult trike is ideal for individuals experiencing arthritis, neck, back or posture issues as it is easier on the body.

North Ridgeville Heart and Sole also donated funds to help the library purchase a Charlie Cart, which is an all-in-one demonstration kitchen. This allows us to provide interactive culinary programs as part of a system-wide initiative to teach community members of all ages how to cook and eat healthier, more nutritious foods, regardless of income level.

Also in collaboration with North Ridgeville Heart and Sole, we were a host site for six weeks of Produce Bag Pickups. Over 400 bags of locally grown produce were sold for \$10 each, with all the proceeds supporting local farmers.

We were able to resume passport services in April and ultimately processed a higher volume of passport applications than in pre-pandemic months.

We were able to get out into the community and attend the Touch a Truck event in June, interacting with more than 1,400 people, and the Corn Festival, with an attendance of over 2,000 people. These were wonderful opportunities to promote our programs and services. Additionally, the City of North Ridgeville used the library’s meeting rooms to teach fire safety to over 360 incoming kindergarteners and first graders attending Safetyville. Library staff made a safety craft for each child, and many families used this as an opportunity to register for the Summer Reading Program.

In partnership with North Ridgeville City Schools and the North Ridgeville Senior Center, we collected over 600 thank letters written by local children and community members celebrating our veterans. During the month of November, these letters were delivered to the Danbury and O’Neill residences, and to the North Ridgeville VFW who shared the letters with veterans throughout Lorain County.



SOUTH LORAIN BRANCH

It was all about the staff and patron relationships at the South Lorain Branch. As the pandemic continued to wreak havoc, many in the community needed help with important forms; such as filing for their retirement benefits, getting a new social security card, filing for unemployment, etc. and it is all online. As one man told the branch manager: “If you need something done with a hammer – I’ve been in construction all my life – I’m your man. But I don’t know how to do anything on the computer!”

Library staff helped a patron who had, unfortunately, been taken advantage of by a friend. They researched contacts for legal aid, low-income lawyers and other business that cater to senior citizens; and then helped her fill out inquiry applications for those resources. “Sometimes patrons just need someone by their side, for that support, to be that guiding light amongst all of the confusion of technology and paperwork,” staffer Amanda Alten said.

This did not surprise new branch manager, Danielle Coward, who says that as a newcomer to the South Lorain Branch, what has really impressed her is the relationships between the staff and patrons. “The staff really know their patrons. There are inside jokes that staff have with patrons, and they know that Tim always wants a fist bump with a boom at the end before he leaves, Paul comes nearly daily to read the papers, someone always wants to discuss books with Amanda and EVERYONE knows Bruni and wants to tell her hi.”

Another highlight for South Lorain Branch was hosting the ALA traveling “Thinking Money for Kids” exhibit, which only 50 libraries in the country were chosen to receive.



Danielle Coward
Manager

“I’m glad we were one of the libraries who remained open and available for our patrons, many of whom had to submit paperwork for their housing and benefits. A lot of our patrons don’t have access to the technology or have the knowledge to complete those tasks.”



Nick Cronin

“Finally in 2021 we were able to reestablish old partnerships that had to be put on hold because of the pandemic. It has been a joy to see and interact with teachers who we have not seen in a year or longer.”



LITTLE LIBRARY ON THE LAKE AND OUTREACH

Little Library on the Lake had a full season of weekly programming. The programs rotated between a school age STEAM activity and a story time. The programs were well attended with several families who became program regulars. The post about Little Library on the Lake reopening for the season was the highest viewed Facebook post of the year.

Discovery On The Go hosted several “Grab & Go Activity Stops” at area playgrounds. We also completed monthly visits to several existing school partners during the first half of the 2021-2022 school year.

The family of a Books by Mail patron who, unfortunately, passed away in 2021 felt that the program had such an influence on their family member’s life that they mentioned Books by Mail in the obituary.

NEW SERVICES:

In addition to the holds lockers and hybrid programming, we also introduced Treat Your Shelf. This system-wide service provides patrons with a list of suggested titles specifically curated by library staff for the individual patrons based on their interests and preferences. A post about this service was our third highest TikTok video of the year.

We now offer “Science and Wellness kits” to help promote life skills to families and classrooms.

SYSTEM WIDE INITIATIVES:

We hosted a Community Shred Day at each branch where we had a shred truck in the lots of our branches and permitted patrons to bring up to five bags or boxes of papers to be shredded for free. Over 245 cars went through the line at the North Ridgeville event alone.

We also hosted two vaccine clinics with Lorain County Public Health. One was held in the Main Library in July. The other was a drive-thru event at the South Lorain Branch in partnership with El Centro, the Lorain County Health Department and the Urban League in which we handed out free school supplies and offered the opportunity to receive a vaccine.

The North Ridgeville and South Lorain Branches participated in the “Put a Lid on It” campaign to celebrate National Bike Safety Month. This included the distribution of free bike helmets and safety information, bike helmet inspections, free bike registrations, a bike rodeo, outdoor story time, obstacle course and bike-themed crafts.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the terror attacks on 9/11, LPLS held programs across the system throughout the month. There were two books discussed, one for teens and one for adults. The teen discussion of “The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland” by Jim DeFede was held virtually while the adult discussion of “Only One Plane in the Sky” by Garrett Graff was held at multiple branches as well as via Zoom. Leading up to the anniversary, LPLS gathered stories from Lorain County residents about their 9/11 experience. The recordings of their personal memories are archived in the 9/11 Collection on Lorain County Memory. In addition, every location had the poster exhibition “September 11, 2001: The Day That Changed the World” from the 9/11 Memorial & Museum available for patrons to view and collections of materials on display for patrons to browse and borrow.

LPLS Staff partnered with several other organizations and libraries in Lorain County to host the Zoom discussion of Robin DiAngelo’s “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism.”

LPLS now offers hybrid programs - those that can be attended either virtually using a device with an internet connection or in person at the library. This makes attending programs more accessible and convenient. Several seniors have expressed their appreciation as they are uncomfortable driving at night so they wouldn’t attend evening programs. Hybrid programs allow them to attend programs they would have otherwise missed.



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