



RITTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2024

Tackle Tech

Tech help customized for you - P 3



From the director



One year ago at a holiday concert by the Vermilion Community Band, I was introduced as the new director of Ritter Public Library. Those 365 days passed by in a flash! During that time, I prioritized building relationships with staff, trustees, the library's supporting organizations, and outside community groups. And sometime along the way, this New Englander started to feel at home in Ohio.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are embarking on a new strategic plan. This process will enable us to focus on a common set of significant issues, provide a forum for conversation, and yield a shared sense of the future. The resulting road map will define a new vision and values, establish priorities, and support decision-making. We will involve community members through an online survey and in-person focus groups – so please look for these opportunities starting in February!

Thank you for your continued support of Ritter Public Library. I hope to see you in the coming year, when you visit us and enjoy what our library has to offer you – a glimpse of which can be found in this newsletter. If you have any suggestions, comments or questions, please feel free to share them with me.

Have a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Sandra Licks, Director

Dodge the winter doldrums

This winter season we have plenty to offer when that cabin fever sets in. Programs range from a self-defense class brought to you by the Vermilion Police Department to a Murder Mystery on Valentine's Day!

Something you won't see on the programming schedule to keep your eye out for as spring approaches is the opening of our brand new seed library, Rooted by Ritter. This will be a small card catalog that will house a myriad of vegetable, fruit, and flower seeds that library visitors will be able to take and use in their own gardens at home. Have too many seeds? Donate those to us to be sorted and put into the seed library for others to use.



Jessica, Adult Services Manager, organizes seeds into a vintage card catalog, the new home of the seed library. The card catalog will get a makeover before its spring debut.

You'll also want to stay tuned in for all our upcoming spring programs - this year we have a fun surprise planned for our patrons. I hope everyone has a wonderful winter season and we'll see you at your favorite library!

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HOURS

Monday - Thursday
9:30 AM - 8:30 PM
Friday & Saturday
9:30 AM - 5:30 PM
Sunday
1 PM - 5 PM

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Vermilion, OH 44089
440-967-3798

info@ritter.lib.oh.us
ritterpubliclibrary.org

Tech tutorials for everyone

It can be challenging to keep up with today's fast-paced technological landscape. Esther, a retired home economics teacher and longtime resident of Vermilion, laments these changes. "I think the general public is being forced into technology. And it's good and it's bad." Before she started coming to the library for help with her tech questions, Esther said that she struggled to use technology. Recently, Esther has attended the library's smartphone classes and met with library staff for individual tutoring. "Angela's helped me... since I got my new phone, my smartphone. She's helped me a lot. She always makes me feel comfortable with asking questions." Esther feels reassured knowing that she has a place to go for help. "I know that if, if it doesn't work for me, or if I fail, then I can come here."

New tech skills can also enrich our favorite leisure activities, like reading. Sherry moved to Vermilion with her

husband a year and a half ago to be closer to her family. Her daughter is a librarian in Pittsburgh, so visiting Ritter Public Library was naturally one of the first things Sherry did here in Vermilion. She loves using her Kindle to read library eBooks, but needed a helping hand to learn the process. After receiving guidance from staff and attending a few classes, she now feels empowered to handle new tech tasks on her own. "I'm not so afraid. And not only that - and I think this is really important for seniors - I always went to, you know, my daughter, my kids about questions. Always, always. And now it's like - no, I'm going to try this first myself." Sherry said that she can now figure things out on her own, and has enjoyed using the library's apps to find books from authors she never would have tried before.

Ritter Public Library offers a variety of services to meet your technology needs including one-on-one appointments, classes, and



*Above: Esther (right) often meets with Angela (left) to learn smartphone skills
On Cover: Melissa (left) and Sherry (right)*

drop-in Q&A sessions, all offered at no cost. Our team members - Jessica, Angela, Melissa, and Chloe - are here to help you with your tech questions, regardless of your experience level. Whether you want to get to know your new smartphone, learn Microsoft Word, or download library apps like Libby or Hoopla to try out ebooks and audiobooks, they will walk you through the process step-by-step and make sure that you leave feeling confident in your new skills. Browse the events section in this newsletter to see our upcoming tech events, or call us at 440-967-3798 to schedule your one-on-one appointment.

Foundation funds literacy

The Ritter Public Library Foundation has had an eventful year helping the library promote literacy in the community. The Foundation was established to close the gap between public funding and the library's needs to ensure that Ritter Public Library remains a vital resource for childhood literacy, technology, cultural and educational events, and public meeting spaces.

For their most recent fundraiser, "Jet to the Game", donors purchased raffle tickets for a chance to ride on a private jet to an Ohio State Buckeyes game.

This fundraiser was a resounding success - proceeds exceeded \$16,000. The Foundation would like to thank all the generous donors who helped to make this fundraiser a great success.

The money raised from Jet to the Game has helped make possible the Foundation's newest initiative. The Foundation approved a grant of up to \$20,000 for Ritter Public Library's Youth Services Department to promote literacy, which will fund an author visit. Other initiatives funded this year include:

- \$2,500 for early childhood

literacy kits

- \$2,100 for 140 copies of *The Haunted Hall* by Joette McDonald for each fourth grade student
- \$117 for a book for each kindergarten student

In total, the Foundation has spent \$24,717 throughout 2023 on these efforts.

The Ritter Public Library Foundation welcomes donations any time of year to support initiatives like this. For more information about giving, visit the Foundation's page on ritterpubliclibrary.org under the "support us" tab or call 440-967-3798 ext. 6416.

A fresh, welcoming space for teens

Good tidings from the Youth Services Department! You're likely enjoying one of the over 4300 new titles purchased in 2023 in the Youth Services Department, but if you indulge me for a moment, I'd like to share with you a multi-faceted project that's taken place in our Teen area over the past several months.

The Teen department of Ritter Public Library is one of the few spaces where Vermilion's teenagers are welcome to visit and relax. Erie County's 2021 Youth Health Assessment focused on the target demographic of the library's teen department, students in grades 6-12. According to this assessment, one-third (2,022) of Erie County youth reported they felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities. Eighteen percent (18%) (approximately 1,103) of youth reported they had seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year. From 2022-2023, 613 of the surveyed youth attempted suicide.

Thanks to funding from The Ritter Public Library Endowment Fund (\$10,000), the Ritter Public Library Foundation (\$8,000), and a recent grant from the Erie County Community Foundation (\$12,500), a renovation of the Teen room is nearing completion. Ritter Public Library welcomes teens and hopes they will feel as though they have their own mindfully built space unique to them. Many of the added features in the space address mental health including light filters, a bubble tube, hand-held manipulatives, and new furniture. In addition, library staff will visit Sailorway Middle School and Vermilion High School to host book clubs once per month, beginning this January.

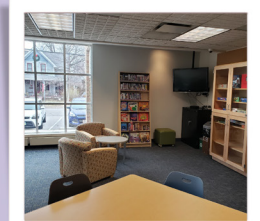
Before



Dated style



Peeling wallpaper

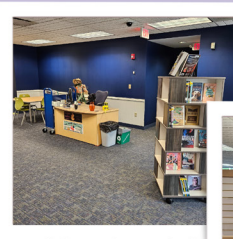


Small TV

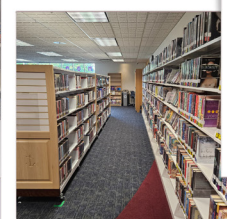
After



Gaming area



Fresh paint



Easy browsing



Open layout

Pre-Project

Assess & develop a phase-based approach for renovation of teen room in 2023.

Phase 1

Survey teens utilizing library for feedback on physical space and programs desired from March-August 2023.

Phase 2

Assess materials in collection and reorganize placement of materials and furniture without incurred expense in March and April 2023.

Phase 3

Assess most needed items for teen space to create an inclusive and welcoming environment to submit to the Ritter Public Library Foundation and Ritter Public Library Endowment Fund for funding in May 2023.



Phase 4

Assess most needed items for teen space to create an inclusive and welcoming environment to submit to Erie County Community Foundation for funding by August 1, 2023.



Phase 5

Create a more welcome and aesthetically calming environment, request funding from the Ritter Public Library's facilities budget to remove wallpaper and paint the teen room May-July 2023.

Phase 6

Host an open house this winter to unveil remaining pieces in the teen space - save the date for Friday, February 23rd from 3 - 5 PM!

Help is close by - 24/7 Crisis Hotline: 800-826-1306 or Text 4HOPE to 741741. ADAMHSERIE.org

Feeding our community

Our community faces significant food insecurity, particularly among children. According to the most recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics, 39.5% of the children in the Vermilion Local Schools received free or reduced lunch during the 2016-17 school year. Furthermore, 12.1% of Erie county and 11.5% of Lorain county residents overall are estimated to be food insecure, according to Feeding America's 2021 data. Our Little Free Fridge, which opened in May of last year, fights this food insecurity by providing easily-accessible, stigma-free aid. Based on the "freedge" concept, it operates on a "take what you need, give what you can" basis: anyone is welcome to take or contribute items with no questions asked. We deeply appreciate everyone who has contributed time, money, or groceries to sustain this project.



While many of us prioritize giving to our most valued causes during the holiday season, we challenge you to carry that giving spirit into the new year! This January, if you have the resources, consider donating food, household basics, or money to help stock our Little Free Fridge. It can cost up to \$200 or more to restock, which needs to be done as often as once per week during periods of high use. You can now make a tax-deductible monetary donation directly to the Dave Arnold Special Projects Fund to help buy groceries to stock the Little Free Fridge. Help us meet our goal to raise \$2000 during the month of January. Just scan the QR code with the camera on your smartphone to make a fast, easy donation with your card or PayPal account. Gifts of any size are appreciated and every dollar helps to combat food insecurity in our community.



Donate

EVENTS

Our full calendar is always available at ritterpubliclibrary.org/events

Children

Happy Noon Year Party

Tuesday, January 2nd
11:30 AM

Couldn't make it to midnight? Come celebrate with us as we kick off 2024 at noon! There will be bubbles, balloons, games, and a small snack! Best for pre-K children, but all ages welcome.

Storytimes (Jan 8th - Feb 14th)

Nursery Rhyme Storytime:
Mondays & Tuesdays, 10 AM
Learn Through Play: Wednesdays,
10 AM

Enjoy themed stories, crafts and activities perfect for ages 0 - 5.

Paws & Pages

Tuesdays
10:30 AM - 12 PM
Our reading dog, Fiona the goldendoodle, visits for kids to practice their reading and petting skills. Great for all ages.



Tales and Teachers

Wednesdays, January 17th and
February 21st
6:30 PM
Your teachers will be special guests at this storytime featuring themed books and a craft. Great for all ages.

Pokémon League

Saturday, January 20th
10 AM

Bring your cards and handheld games to face off with fellow trainers. We'll provide crafts, activities, and movies. Recommended for grades 3 - 6.

Teddy Bear Picnic

Thursday, February 15th
3 PM

Bring your best stuffed friend and join us for a teddy bear picnic! We'll have games, activities, music, and a small snack. Recommended for grades K - 3.



Life-Sized Candyland **RR**

Monday, February 19th
10 AM, 11 AM, or 3 PM
YOU are the playing piece in this classic board game! Walk through a magical candyland and collect treats as you go. Great for grades K - 3.

For Homeschoolers

Homeschool STEAM Club

Thursdays, January 11th & February 8th
2 PM

Join us for STEAM-based learning activities perfect for your homeschooled children ages 8-13.

Homeschool Book Club

Thursdays, January 25th & February 22nd
2 PM

Meet fellow homeschoolers to talk about what you've been reading lately - there's no assigned book.



Tween & Teen

Dungeons & Dragons*

Grades 4 - 7: Wednesdays,
January 10th & February 14th
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Grades 8 - 12: Saturdays, January
13th & February 10th
2 PM - 4 PM

Try out the hit game filled with magic, mystery, and adventure. Characters are premade and ready to play - all experience levels welcome.



Board Game Night

Tuesdays, January 23rd & February 27th
4 PM

Bring a game to share or choose from our collection. Some games may be complicated for small children. Open to all ages.

Adult

Self-Defense with the Vermilion Police Dept **RR**

Wednesday, January 3rd
4 PM

Vermilion's Police Captain, Jim Graham, will lead a Self-Defense class to teach us how



to properly perform self-defense techniques and when and where to expect to use them. During the final hour, you'll get to practice your new moves and beat up Captain Graham himself!

Adult Storytime **RR**

Thursdays, January 4th & 18th,
February 1st, 15th, & 29th
11 AM

Adults with diverse intellectual and developmental disabilities can experience the benefits of storytime, crafts, music and dance! Caregivers must remain present with adults requiring supervision.

Snowman Wreath **RR**

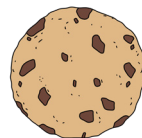
Monday, January 8th
6 PM

Craft a cute snowman wreath to add a wintry touch to your seasonal decor. All materials will be provided.

Cookies & Coloring **RR**

Wednesdays, January 10th & February 14th
11 AM

Feel your stress melt away as you color, chat, and snack on homemade cookies at this adults-only event.



Tech Thursday

2nd & 4th Thursdays
7 PM

At each Tech Thursday, we'll discuss a different technology topic and show you how to use the technology step-by-step. Bring your own smartphone, laptop, or tablet for hands-on learning and Q&A. These sessions are informal - drop in at any time during the hour to ask your questions or just learn something new. All skill levels are welcome and no prior knowledge is assumed.

January 11th: Digital Declutter

January 25th: Facebook & Instagram

February 8th: Bluetooth & Wireless

February 22nd: Maps

Crafting with Angela **RR**

Book Binding Pt 1 (Stab Binding):

Tuesday, January 16th at 6 PM

Book Binding Pt 2 (Coptic Binding):

Tuesday, January 30th at 6 PM

Crochet for Beginners

Tuesday, February 20th at 6 PM

Angela will lead you through a new, fun craft each session. All materials will be provided.

Genealogy Resource Sharing

Wednesdays, January 24th & February 28th

6 PM

Join fellow enthusiasts to work on projects and share advice.

College Club Presents: Enjoyable Ways to Wellness

Tuesday, February 6th
7 PM

Representatives from Amherst HealthPlex at Lorain County Metro Parks Hollstein Reservation fitness site will meet with us to share information

RR Registration is required. Visit ritterpubliclibrary.org/events or call 440-967-3798 to register.

Book Discussion Groups

Our adult book discussion groups always welcome new participants. Find copies of the upcoming books at the main desk, or find the ebook or audiobook in the Libby app.

Ritter Reads Book Discussion

First Tuesdays, January 2nd & February 6th at 6 PM

Connect with fellow readers, share what you've read recently, and get ideas for your TBR list - there's no required reading!

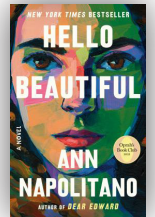
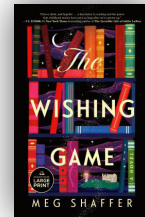
Brewed Awakening Book Social

2nd Thursdays, January 11th & February 8th at 2:30 PM

Books and coffee make a perfect pair! Join us at Brewed Awakening Vermilion to sip on your favorite beverage while we discuss the month's read.

January: *The Wishing Game* by Meg Shaffer

February: *Hello Beautiful* by Ann Napolitano



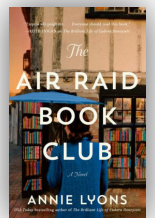
Shelf Indulgence Book Discussion

3rd Mondays, January 15th & February 19th at 6 PM

We're reading fiction by new, up-and-coming, or lesser-known authors.

January: *Black Cake* by Charmaine Wilkerson

February: *Air Raid Book Club* by Annie Lyons



Top 100 of the Last 100 Book Discussion

Last Wednesdays, January 31st & February 28th at 10:30 AM

We're reading through the best selling books of each of the last 100 years.

January: *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri

February: *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman



about the many options for good health and wellness available close to home including Yoga, Zumba, Cardio, Strength, Fall Prevention, and more. Presented in partnership with the College Club of Vermilion.

Valentine's Murder Mystery **RR**



Tuesday, February 13th and Wednesday, February 14th 6 PM

A murder has happened at the Library! We're traveling back to the 80's when leg warmers and big hair were the style. You'll be

the detectives hired to solve this Valentine's engagement party gone wrong. Solve the case within the allotted time limit or the suspect may be free - forever. Come in your favorite 80's getup and receive an extra clue for your efforts.

More From Vermillion to Vermilion **RR**

Wednesday, February 21st 7 PM

Baumhart, Coen, Fischer, Kishman, Wakefield. Most of these names are still very familiar to most Vermillionites. Rich Tarrant,

curator of the Vermilion History Museum, will continue his talk about the individual and collective roles of these personalities in shaping "Vermillion" into the Vermilion we know and love. Presented in partnership with the Vermilion Historical Society.

Paint By Number with Melissa **RR**

Friday, February 23rd 3 PM

Get your creative juices flowing with a fun paint by number kit. All materials will be provided.



RR Registration is required. Visit ritterpubliclibrary.org/events or call 440-967-3798 to register.



RITTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

5680 Liberty Ave
Vermilion, OH 44089

Chocolate Fest is back!

Saturday, February 3rd

9:30 AM - 12 PM

Would you like to bake?

Bakers are asked to make a minimum of 4 dozen sample-size treats. Scan the QR code with the camera on your smartphone to register online, or stop in the library by January 26th to fill out the form in person.



Stay in touch!

Follow us on social media and sign up for monthly email newsletters to be the first to find out about new events, services, and more



Scan the QR code
using the camera on
your smartphone