



Friends of Benzonian Public Library

Working to ensure adequate funds for the Benzonian Public Library through advocacy, fund raising, and promotion.

Friends Make a Difference!

Dear Friends,

August 2021

The Friends of Benzonian Public Library ask you to consider a donation to help us support the Library. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, we rely on our old friends and encourage new friends to help us provide the extras that keep Benzonian Public Library a vibrant destination in Benzie County. The Library's state-designated service area includes all or portions of Benzonian, Homestead, Joyfield, and Lake Townships, but **everyone** (no matter where you might live) is welcome to use the Library.

The property tax millage collected by Benzonian Township pays mainly for the basics at the library, such as: rent, staffing, utilities, and part of collection development, i.e., purchase of books and other materials that the Library lends to the public free of charge. We are incredibly grateful for the millage (without which the Library could not run), but it does **not** fund the Library's entire operation. The extras that the Friends provide put our wonderful Library over the top. This past fiscal year, the Friends have funded these extras and more:

- OverDrive digital services (eBooks and audio books downloadable to your computer/device)
- Computers, a new printer, and computer technical support
- Portion of collection development, including books and DVDs
- Summer reading program, youth services, and newsletter
- Carpet and window cleaning
- Hexagonal tables for the porch
- General support funds

Last year, the Friends received a grant from Benzie County Community Chest for the 2nd year of Prime Time Family Reading Time program for elementary students and their families; unfortunately, the pandemic forced its cancellation. We were very grateful that the BCCC allowed us to repurpose that grant to help support this year's highly successful summer reading program.

A grant received from the DTE Foundation helped fund the technology needs at BPL. We truly appreciate their generosity.

Although the pandemic forced it to close for several months in 2020, the Library shifted to curbside and "by-appointment" visits to ensure patrons still had access to library materials. Also, the Mills Community House provided free use of the lower level, which allowed wide enough spacing for the Library to reopen its public-access computers. The Library's free 24/7 WiFi and digital services were also well used during and beyond the shutdown.

Volunteers often provide extra help doing background tasks like reshelving books, packing interlibrary loan items, and preparing for programs. Volunteers also create and maintain the website and newsletter, and they staff activities, programs, and special projects. See the reverse side for the Library's impressive list of programs, activities, and services in fiscal year 2020-2021.

Last year the Friends chose not to solicit contributions during the pandemic, but we were still able to continue our support of the Library, although that support significantly depleted our accounts. This year, we would truly appreciate any help you can give to Friends of Benzonian Public Library, whether it is your hard-earned money or your volunteer time, or both.

Gratefully yours,

Friends of Benzonian Public Library Board of Directors:

Ruth Catton, Roger Dewey, Kathleen Johnson, Michelle Leines, Jimmy McLaren, and Flint Watt

2020/2021 at Benzonia Public Library!

With the help of an amazing staff, incredible patrons, wonderful Trustees,
and the best volunteers we could hope for;
Benzonia Public Library has met the demands of a challenging year.

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of our Friends group and
many generous donors, support was provided to meet the needs of BPL.

BPL staff worked hard to provide the best service possible during difficult times. The goal was to not only provide a service, but to also stay connected and engaged with the community. Some of the highlights from the past 18 months include:

- ◆ Creating the opportunity for community members without library cards to sign up for a card online, allowing access to our online services throughout the closure
- ◆ Partnering with the local elementary school to get summer reading program bags in the hands of kids via the school bus
- ◆ A virtual Summer Reading Program “Imagine Your Story” in 2020 was open to all and included Puppet Shows, Reading Challenges and PRIZES!
- ◆ As soon allowed, Curbside pick-up, browsing by appointment, and computer center access was offered.
- ◆ Wrapping up year one of the Remembering Benzie Oral History Project, including History in the Making interviews with local teachers and students regarding their experiences with quarantine.
- ◆ Virtual StoryTime with Miss Désirée offered weekly stories plus crafts and activities September through May. Craft kits were available for pick-up at BPL.
- ◆ Thanks to a collaborative effort with the Advocates for Benzie County, the library was able to offer PoWeR Book Bags, which included six books to add to the child's home library!
- ◆ LEGO-Rama at home building competition followed up with the addition of LEGO kits to check-out for at home entertainment.
- ◆ STEM Kits are available for check-out thanks to a collaborative effort between the Traverse Area District Library, Newton's Road, and a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services
- ◆ A Caregiver Resource Library including books and DVDs is now offered thanks to Benzie Senior Resources.
- ◆ Year two of the Remembering Benzie Oral History Project interns completed six Veteran's interviews were sent to the Library of Congress Veteran's History Project! The interns also finished their Legacy interviews and Final projects.
- ◆ Ice Skates are available for check-out during the winter in a variety of adult and children's sizes. A huge Thank You to Dr. Lisa Musgrave for her generous donation.
- ◆ *What the Eyes Don't See* author, Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, joined BPL for a virtual conversation via Zoom.
- ◆ Computer Help with Dustin on the porch has been offered throughout the summer.
- ◆ Cooking with Jamie Online began in July. Classes focused on how to use under rated pantry items.
- ◆ The Friends of BPL held a Summer Book, Puzzle, DVD, & Craft sale.
- ◆ The Corner Book Shoppe in the library is also a popular year round feature.
- ◆ A hybrid Summer Reading Program “Tails and Tales” in 2021 was open to all. It included virtual Puppet Shows, in-person programs at the park and PRIZES!
- ◆ The MSU Plant Diagnostic Clinic was offered on the front porch.
- ◆ NOTE: Videos for Summer Reading Puppet shows, StoryTime programs, and Remembering Benzie projects are available on the Benzonia Public Library YouTube station.