



Buckeye  
*Book Fair*



# BUCKEYE AUTHORS BOOK FAIR COMMITTEE, INC. ANNUAL REPORT

2024



330-249-1455

[info@BuckeyeBookFair.org](mailto:info@BuckeyeBookFair.org)

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

# OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

In 2024, the Buckeye Authors' Book Fair Committee, Inc. (Buckeye Book Fair) remained dedicated to celebrating Ohio's literary talent and promoting a culture of reading and engagement across the state. This year, we set four key goals: increasing overall engagement, highlighting authors with notable achievements, enhancing accessibility and inclusion, and advancing sustainability efforts. Through strategic initiatives, strengthened partnerships, and continuous feedback, we expanded our reach and deepened our impact. From fostering connections between authors and readers to implementing new programs that make literature more accessible to all, our efforts reflected our ongoing commitment to literacy, creativity, and community enrichment. We hope you will enjoy this summary of activities in 2024.



## Increase Overall Engagement

Book Bits: Newsletter: 64% Open Rate

Facebook: 55,000 Users in October 2024

6,077 Books available at The Buckeye Book Fair and 3,245 Books Sold.

93 Volunteers, 108 Authors, 570 Young Authors, and 1400 Guests



## Include Authors with Notable Achievements

- Illustrator Richard Cowdrey shares his latest Fiona the Hippo story.
- Andy J. Pizza inspires creativity through self-love and self-expression.
- From the Diamond to the Gridiron – groundbreaking sports writers.
- Loren Long discusses The Yellow Bus and his creative journey.



## Strengthen Accessibility & Inclusion

Buckeye Book Fair welcomed authors with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive community. Sensory-friendly hours were a success for guests, providing a comfortable experience for attendees with sensory sensitivities.



## Improve Sustainability Efforts

Buckeye Book Fair improved sustainability efforts by increasing grant acquisition, ensuring continued recovery for literacy programs post Covid-19.





## Increase Overall Engagement

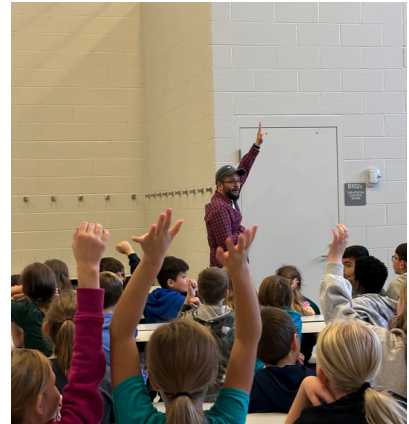


In 2024, we were excited to have 93 volunteers join us, including new faces. These dedicated individuals quickly became an essential part of our team, assisting with book sorting, inventory management, cashier duties, event setup and tear-down, and shipping and receiving. Their contributions were crucial to the success of our operations, and we are deeply grateful for their enthusiasm and unwavering support of our mission.





## Increase Overall Engagement



Overall engagement grew through a variety of author events and outreach programs. Readers connected with authors at book signings and Buckeye Book Crawl gatherings featuring Joanna Hardis and Fern Haught. Andy J. Pizza's rural school tour brought inspiration to students in 13 schools, while seven talented authors led workshops at Buckeye Book Camp, fostering creativity and literacy among young writers.



## Include Authors with Notable Achievements

- The Buckeye Book Fair was honored to welcome veteran meteorologist **André Bernier**, who shared his passion for weather and storytelling. In his memoir, Bernier reflects on his career, from early broadcasting to his work with WJW-TV and The Weather Channel. His insights into meteorology and the ever-changing skies fascinated readers.
- New York Times bestselling author and illustrator **Loren Long** gave attendees a behind-the-scenes look at The Yellow Bus. He shared his artistic journey, creative process, and collaborations with figures like Barack Obama and Amanda Gorman. With his signature storytelling and evocative illustrations, Long continues to inspire young readers.
- Award-winning journalist **Keith O'Brien** engaged audiences with his compelling narratives of American history and sports. His latest book, Charlie Hustle, has been praised as a “masterpiece” by Kirkus Reviews and “compulsively readable” by The Wall Street Journal. A finalist for the PEN/ESPN Award for Literary Sportswriting, O'Brien’s work has appeared in The New York Times Magazine, The Atlantic, The Washington Post, and on NPR.
- **Fern Haught**’s journey with the Buckeye Book Fair came full circle as they returned as a featured author. Growing up, Haught attended the fair, participated as a Young Author, and now writes for Simon & Schuster. Their work fosters curiosity and self-discovery, offering young readers fresh perspectives. Haught’s presence underscored the fair’s role in inspiring future writers.

### Promoting Literacy ~ Helping Ohio Authors

#### Ohio’s Foremost Literary Showcase

<b>319</b>	<b>6077</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Book Titles</b>	<b>Books</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>Devotion</b>

# 108

Authors & Illustrators

# 1400

Buckeye Book Fair Guests



**Buckeye Book Fair**  
**2024 Annual Report**





## Strengthen Accessibility & Inclusion

The Buckeye Book Fair is committed to strengthening accessibility and inclusion, ensuring all readers and creators feel welcome. Executive Director, Kimberly Jarvis attended the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) conference in Seattle, Washington, through a generous capacity-building grant from the Ohio Arts Council. She implemented wider aisles, support personnel, a more inclusive volunteer team, and Selection Committee for the Buckeye Book Fair. This year, we're proud to feature Andy J. Pizza, who openly shares his experiences with neurodiversity, and Katie Mazeika, a neurodivergent and disabled children's book author and illustrator who highlights diverse stories. With young authors bringing fresh perspectives, wider aisles for improved mobility, and sensory-friendly hours for those who benefit from a calmer environment, we continue to create a more inclusive and welcoming literary experience for all.





## Improve Sustainability Efforts

The Buckeye Book Fair has strengthened its sustainability efforts by securing additional grants and expanding partnerships, ensuring the continued recovery and growth of literacy programs post-COVID-19. In 2024, partnering organizations played a significant role in the fair's development and recovery. We are grateful for the support of the Laura B. Frick Grant, Wayne County Community Foundation, Ohio Arts Council, and Arts Midwest, whose contributions have been instrumental in sustaining our mission.

Additionally, partnerships with the Wayne County Public Library and Tri-County Educational Service Center increased, further enhancing our impact. Corporate sponsors including Seaman Corporation, Wooster Glass Company, D&S Distribution, Morton Salt, Germain Honda of College Hills, Consumers National Bank, Critchfield, Critchfield & Johnson, Pinnacle Press, Kiwanis of Wooster, and the Romich Foundation Makerspace provided essential funding and support.

The Buckeye Book Fair also benefits from collaborations with the Wayne County Schools Career Center and the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education. These funding opportunities enable us to support author events, educational initiatives, and community outreach, making books and literary experiences more accessible. By investing in long-term sustainability, the Buckeye Book Fair remains dedicated to fostering literacy, supporting authors, and enriching the reading community for years to come.

## BEST-SELLING AUTHORS

Will Hillenbrand  
Richard Cowdrey  
Loren Long  
Dandi Daley Mackall  
Julie Ann Lindsey





## Summary of Activities

The Buckeye Book Fair fostered literacy and celebrated Ohio's literary talent through diverse programs that engaged readers of all ages.

### Buckeye Book Crawl

In partnership with the Wayne County Public Library, this week-long series brought renowned authors to venues across Wayne County. Events featured authors such as **Fern Haught** (The Baker and the Bard), **Mindy McGinnis** (A Long Stretch of Bad Days), **Dr. Jason Edwin Anderson** (historian of General David Wooster), **Barry Gott** (The Tugboat and the Silver Moon), **Julie Anne Lindsey** (I'll Be Home for Mischief), **Scott Longert** (Bad Boys, Bad Times), **Ralph Paulk** (sports journalism expert), **David Lee Morgan Jr.** (Black Trailblazers in Sports), **Joanna Hardis** (Just Do Nothing), and **Andrew Welsh-Huggins** (Sick to Death).

### Buckeye Book Camp

This summer program nurtured young writers and illustrators through hands-on workshops. Led by **Jerzy Drozd** (comic book artist), **Kori Frazier Morgan** (author), and **Lillian Mazeika** (literary agent), students explored storytelling, comics, and publishing in a fun, immersive setting. Guest Teaching Artists included **Merrill Rainey**, **Lindsay Bonilla**, **Katie Mazeika**, and **Florenza Lee**.

### School Visits, Rural Tour & Excellence Awards

Authors and illustrators traveled to lead writing workshops, inspiring students to express their creativity. This year's presenters included **Jerzy Drozd**, **Lindsay Bonilla**, and **Andy J. Pizza**. The program also honored outstanding Young Authors through the Excellence Awards, recognizing exceptional storytelling from students such as **Bailey Webb**, **Elizabeth Ungerer**, **Remi Garrison**, **Ryne Gessel**, **Emmett Ramseyer**, **Truet Steiner**, **Lydia Decker**, and **Lucero Cisneros Zambrano**.

### Young Authors Conference

In partnership with regional schools and arts organizations, this one-day event welcomed over 500 students for intensive workshops on writing and illustration. Students learned directly from published authors and illustrators, including **Will Hillenbrand**, **Terri Libenson**, **Conrad Storad**, and **Lindsay Ward**.





## Celebrating Ohio at The Fair

### Buckeye Book Fair

The grand finale of the year, the Buckeye Book Fair, gathered over 100 authors for book signings, discussions, and community engagement. Readers of all ages came together to celebrate literature and support Ohio's writing community.

### Featured Presentations

Illustrator **Richard Cowdrey** shared insights from his latest Halloween story featuring Fiona the Hippo, delighting young readers. **Andy J. Pizza** explored how self-love fuels creativity and self-expression.

A panel of sports historians, including **Scott Longert, Keith O'Brien, Ralph Paulk, and David Lee Morgan Jr.**, highlighted groundbreaking moments in athletics. Loren Long provided a behind-the-scenes look at *The Yellow Bus* and his collaborations with figures like Barack Obama and Amanda Gorman.

A discussion on children's literature featured **Lindsay Bonilla, Molly David, Erin Guendelsberger, Barry Gott, Will Hillenbrand, Dandi Daley Mackall, and JP Mitchell**, while **John Gorman** shared stories from his time shaping Cleveland's legendary WMMS radio station.

Graphic novelists **Anne Drozd, Fern Haight, Wes Molebash, Rafael Rosado, and Joe Sutphin** explored the art of visual storytelling. Authors **Heather Cole, David Meyers, Elise Meyers Walker, Mark Sebastian Jordan, Mandy Shunnarah, Mark Strecker, and Jane Turzillo** uncovered fascinating historical stories from America's heartland.

Meteorologist **André Bernier** reflected on his broadcasting career, while fiction writers **Amanda Flower, Shelly Costa, Anastasia Hastings, Chrissy Hartmann, Connie Berry, and Andrew Welsh-Huggins** discussed the craft of storytelling.

Finally, middle-grade authors **C. Dale Brittain, Keila Dawson, Florenza Lee, Mary Kay Carson, David Rickert, Terri Libenson, and Carmella Van Vleet** explored how books inspire young minds with bold ideas.

These engaging presentations showcased a diverse range of literary voices, offering inspiration for readers of all ages. This is just a glimpse of the incredible authors at the Buckeye Book Fair. Each author brought a unique perspective to the world of literature, offering something for every reader. Explore, engage, and be inspired as you celebrate the joy of books!

# EXPANDING SERVICES BASED ON FEEDBACK

Feedback from attendees, volunteers, and authors was instrumental in shaping our initiatives:

- Attendees suggested improved signage and clearer entry points, which we will implement in future events.
- We received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with participants enjoying meeting authors, discovering new books, and attending talks.

In response, we are adding more live videos, running a campaign to collect email addresses, inviting a headliner, and adding digital signage at the festival.

## Event Data and Metrics

- Overall Attendance: Approximately 8,500 participants attended events, engaged with outreach programming, and read newsletters.
- Books Sold: 3,904 books were sold, with over 109 authors and illustrators participating.
- Geographical Reach: We attracted attendees from over 26 different cities, including some from out of state.
- New and Returning Participants: About 30% were first-time attendees, and around 50% were regular participants.

## Social Media Engagement:

- Facebook: Reached over 55,000 users, with 15,000 visits and 221 new followers, totaling 1,989 followers.
- Instagram: 138.9K views, 60.7K reached with 4.8K interactions, and 8.1K visits. There were 191 new followers, totaling 823 followers.
- Twitter: was not focused on in 2024.
- YouTube: 13.8K Views, 2.1K Hours watched, 231,408 impressions.
- TikTok: 129 followers, 12,500 video views, 3,215 audience reach, 94 profile views

## Website Analytics

- 27,409 Views of the Homepage
- 11,668 Visitors to the Website
- 1,136 Downloads of the 2024 Catalog

## Sales Figures:

- 2021 \$39,841.72 | 2,707 Books Sold
- 2022 \$63,708.98 | 3,601 Books Sold
- 2023 \$59,981.12 | 3,436 Books Sold
- 2024 \$64,034.30 | 3,904 Books Sold

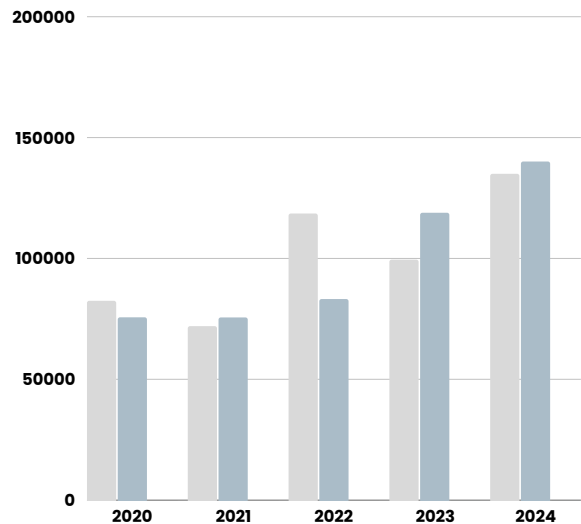
As we reflect on 2024, we are proud of the progress made in fostering literary engagement, supporting Ohio authors, and expanding accessibility. These achievements were made possible through the dedication of our partners, volunteers, and supporters. Looking ahead, we remain committed to building on this momentum, ensuring that the Buckeye Book Fair continues to inspire readers and writers across the state. Thank you for being part of our mission.

# PARTNERING WITH BUCKEYE BOOK FAIR

The rising costs in the book industry continued to present financial challenges for the Buckeye Book Fair in 2024. Despite our ongoing efforts to balance expenses and income, increased costs for materials, production, and logistics put a strain on our budget. Thanks to the generous support of Arts Midwest, the Wayne County Community Foundation, and the Laura B. Frick Foundation, we were able to navigate these challenges, closing the year with expenses of \$140,097.12 and income of \$135,011.52. However, the need for additional sponsorship remains critical. As we look ahead to 2025, corporate sponsorships and individual donations will be essential to sustaining and growing our literary programs and events. Continued support will help us bridge financial gaps and ensure the Buckeye Book Fair remains a vibrant celebration of Ohio's literary community.

## ■ Buckeye Book Fair Income    ■ Buckeye Book Fair Industry Expenses

Join us in championing literacy and community by partnering with the Buckeye Book Fair as a sponsor for the 2025 season. Your support will help us continue our vital programs, nurture emerging authors, and bring enriching literary experiences to Ohio. Together, we can make a lasting impact. Let's create a brighter future for readers and writers alike.



## Contact

Buckeye Authors' Book Fair Committee, Inc.

304 N. Market St. Wooster, Ohio 44691

330-249-1455

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

[ExecutiveDirector@BuckeyeBookFair.org](mailto:ExecutiveDirector@BuckeyeBookFair.org)

