

Executive Director’s Report February 2021

What’s New @ AHML

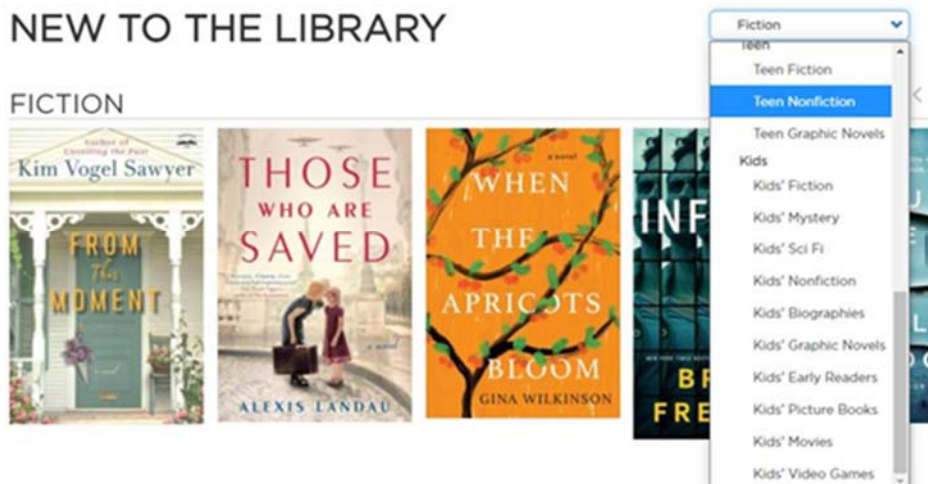
COVID-19 Vaccine Resources Page Helping the Community

In February, the [COVID-19 Vaccine Resources page](#) garnered 2,163 page visits. Created and maintained by Info Services Librarian Barb Powers, the page ranked 6th in popularity on our site, and the average amount of time spent on the page was 4:09 minutes. To exit the page, 53% of people clicked on an external link, meaning they actively used the information provided! This page is updated frequently to include information focused on helping community members learn about how and where to get vaccinated, as well as more general information about the vaccine, testing and crisis resources.

We think the information you have up for the COVID vaccine is absolutely wonderful. It made it a lot easier for me to get my first shot. Whoever put it up, congratulations. It has been wonderful.

New to the Library

New Kids and New Teen titles are now included in the “New to the Library” carousel on the home page, as well as on the carousel on the Books, Movies, Music & More page. There are three sections in the drop-down list – one for new adult items, one for new teen items and one for new kids items, with categories within each section. This will provide customers another way to easily browse the new titles from the comfort of their home.



New ESL and Literacy Office

The English as a Second Language (ESL) office was moved to the first floor late last year to increase visibility, draw in more customers, make the office easier to find, and to bring the office closer to the collection. In February, the new office opened to the public. In preparation for the relocation of the office, ESL staff spent time packing, moving and unpacking. Facilities, IT, Collection Services, Administration, Marketing & Communications and Circulation and Community Services staff helped prepare the new space for the move!



College Collection

To make browsing easier for high school students, Candy Rossin created a "college" collection located next to the teen test books outside of the Hub. This new collection includes traditional and specialized college guides, books on writing application essays, financial aid, and other relevant titles for college-bound students.

Quarantine Update

On February 24, the quarantine time for material returns was reduced from 72-hours to 24-hours, based on the latest research that COVID-19 mainly spreads through respiratory droplets in the air. This coincides with the quarantine timeline for all RAILS' material and provides a positive impact on customer accounts and staff processes.

Reintroducing the Studio

Unfortunately, due to the enclosed spaces in the Studio, it is still not safe for customers to comfortably use. Digital Services has received various customer requests for Studio usage, the bulk of which are for the digitization equipment. Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith and Digital Services Manager Jack Bower identified an ideal space to move a significant portion of the Studio's hardware that takes advantage of the more open space's ventilation system, but still provides seclusion and access.

On February 17, the new setup was made available in a quiet space near the Computer Lab and the exterior building windows. Arlington Heights cardholders can book the area one week in advance. Sessions are for up to two hours per day, and up to one party of two at a time.

The new setup features the standard array of Studio software (Adobe Creative Cloud, GarageBand, Final Cut Pro, Logic Pro, and more) and scanners. Additionally, customers can use and reserve the VHS conversion kit, reel to reel kit, audio conversion kit and batch slide scanner.

In February, the reintroduced Studio saw 15 reservations. Though some of the Studio's amenities are still unavailable, such as audio recording and photography equipment, staff and customers are very pleased that what is being offered is back!



Diversity and Inclusion

The Arlington Heights Memorial Library celebrated Black History Month during the month of February through live programming, displays, activities and curated booklists that highlight Black voices.

Black History Month Displays

Youth Services staff curated and maintained Black History Month displays in Kids' World and the Hub, featuring nonfiction and #ownvoices titles. Resources were also featured in a [wakelet](#) to support at-home learners and caregivers interested in exploring the topic with their students.

StoryWalk® and Activity Kit Celebrating Black History Month

In celebration of Black History Month, Kids' World offered a storywalk throughout the department as well as outside of the library on Vail Avenue. Youth Services Advisor Justin Ashley selected the book *Sing a Song: How "Lift Every Voice and Sing" Inspired Generations* by Kelly Starling. A complementary activity kit was developed that contained supplies to make a string bracelet with beads matching the colors of the Pan-African flag. Each kit included an informational card describing the significance of the Pan-African flag and highlighting notable Black Americans as well as a link to resources to support caregivers talking to children about racism.



The Long Shadow Partnership

On February 24, Arlington Heights Memorial Library joined 29 other local libraries to collaborate with *Racial Awareness in the North Shore* (RAIN), and *Together is Better Alliance* (TiBA) to welcome 398 attendees across communities to a special Q&A with Frances Causey, award-winning Director of *The Long Shadow*. The film follows Frances as she traces her family's legacy of white privilege. It was available to view without a library card from February 19-26, as well as through *Kanopy* anytime with an AHML card. Moderated by Film Producer Nick Kelso, the event included details of Frances' journey into her past and what that means today. Frances addressed questions that had been submitted prior to the event. In a post-event survey launched through *Zoom*, 44 AHML cardholders indicated 97% satisfaction rate of Excellent or Very Good. When asked "What did you like most about tonight's event?" Arlington Heights viewers shared:

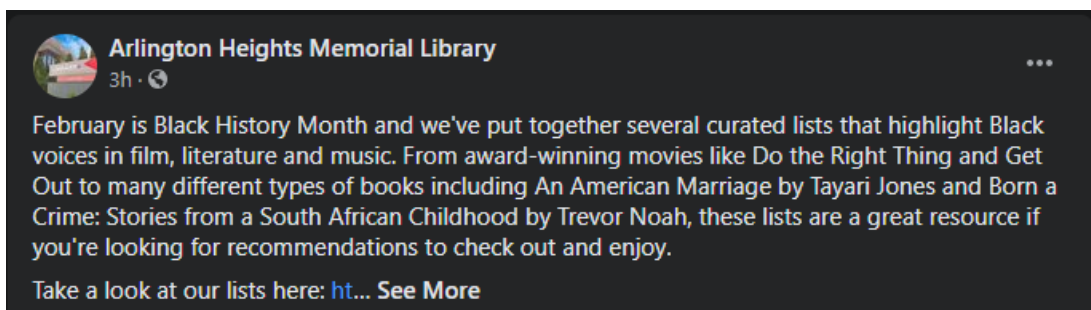
- *Hearing Frances' reflections of her own experiences.*
- *The honesty and truth from Frances about her own struggles with racism*
- *Frances is authentic and showed her passion to correct the ills of our past.*
- *The chance to learn more about the film and the process and research that went into it direct from the source.*

Black Voices Booklists and Displays

In February, Info Advisors created ten Booklists on the Readers' Services page and several in library displays.

Lists included Black Voices in: [Novels](#), [Music](#), [Mystery](#), [Memoir/Biography](#), [Science Fiction & Fantasy](#), [Cinema](#), and [Romance](#).

The Featured DVD display topic was "Black Voices Matter" and had 183 DVDs checked out. The Spotlight Display featured eight topics and had a total of 97 items checked out. The most popular shelf included Black Voices which featured all genres and was on display all month. Communications and Marketing promoted these lists on social media in celebration of Black History month.



Cards for Kids Act Library Cards

We issued the first AHML library card through the [Cards for Kids Act](#) to a family with a young student on February 22. Through this act, students at households meeting income guidelines in unincorporated areas of Arlington Heights or the surrounding area may obtain an AHML library card at no cost. We are very excited to provide this service to low-income and underserved families.

LGBT Ancestors Program

On February 17, Genealogy and Local History Librarian Jaymie Middendorf hosted speaker Thomas MacEntee for an inclusive and informative program *Hiding Out in the Open: Researching Your LGBT Ancestors*. The program focused on using search syntax, keywords, and different strategies to find LGBT relatives when researching genealogy. By understanding the basics of “gay history” as well as how LGBT folk lived, worked and socialized, researchers can not only locate these relatives, but realize the importance of preserving their stories. An audience of 34 attended the program.

Outreach and Community Engagement

Viator House of Hospitality

ESL/Literacy Services Coordinator Tracy Karim met with the case workers from [Viator House of Hospitality](#) at St. Viator's on February 19. The purpose of this visit was to talk about the programs and services provided by the ESL & Literacy Services officer, and to see what help the library may be able to offer as they work to improve their residents' English proficiency and literacy skills. They are looking for more in-person volunteers, opportunities for conversation in English for their clients and to establish a print collection at their location.

Women's and Children's Center

On February 2, ESL/Literacy Services Coordinator Tracy Karim met with Program Coordinator Carinna Tello of District 214's *Women's and Children's Center*. They explored ways in which the ESL office at the library can help their family learners. The greatest need is additional opportunities for conversation in English. Bilingual Advisor Catalina Shin joined Youth Services Supervisor Rebecca King for a virtual visit with the *Women's and Children's Center* this same month. Catalina shared updates about the new ESL office as well as a variety of programs with the mothers in the group.

Preschool to Go

Arlington Height Park District invited Lead Youth Outreach Specialist Laura Dakas to record a storytime video for their Preschool to Go program. Caregivers who opt out of in-person preschool for their child can participate in this program and receive recordings of usual classroom activities like stories, music, play, etc. Collaborating ahead of the recording allowed time for the teachers to create crafts and prep supplies to go along with the storytime.

Supporting Students Compiling Veteran Stories

On Tuesday, February 9, Local History and Genealogy Librarian Jaymie Middendorf, Youth Outreach Specialist Emily Muszynski and Teen Librarian Evan Mather hosted a virtual oral history workshop with students from Saint Viator High School, to prepare them for interviews with local veterans. Library staff modeled best practices for getting the most out of an interview and led teens through an exercise to try these techniques in the classroom before their interview with veterans. The students' interviews will be published in a book that will be later donated to the library. This is Saint Viator's fourth publication of local veteran stories.

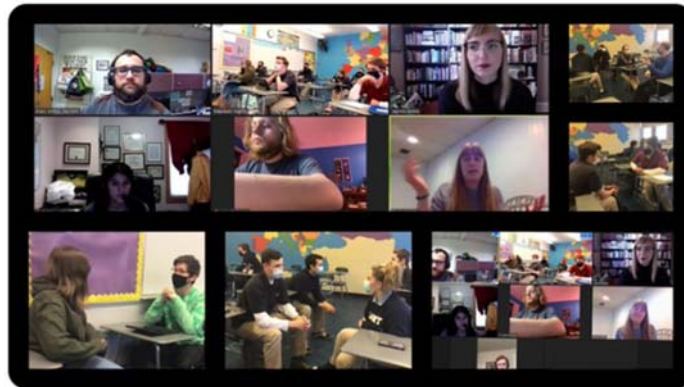


SVHS Ed Tech
@SVHSEdTech



Thank you to Jaymie, Evan, & Emily @ahml for working with our AP Euro & APUSH students to develop interviewing techniques and oral history skills as they begin the process of writing a book based on interviews with local veterans.

[#communitycollaboration](#) [#GoLions](#)



8:30 PM · Feb 9, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

3 Retweets 12 Likes

Stonebridge Pop-up

On Monday, February 22, bookmobile and Youth Services staff restarted the collaborative pop-up outreach at Stonebridge of Arlington Heights apartments. Youth Services Outreach staff will be joining bookmobile staff weekly, bringing customers at this incredibly busy stop more popular library materials and take-home crafts. Kids at Stonebridge apartments love to see their own table and the opportunity to talk with a librarian about their next book.

Program Highlights

COVID Conversation

On February 18, Bilingual Advisor Catalina Shin and Digital Services' Supervisor Gregory Berger welcomed 19 participants to February's edition of COVID Conversations: Housing for Homeless. This month featured community members Todd Stull, Clinical Director, JOURNEYS | The Road Home and Sonia Ivanov, Executive Director, NorthWest Compass, Inc. They shared the ways their organizations have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and how their services adjusted to continue serving those in need of shelter. During the 45-minute virtual program, presenters answered questions via chat. Attendees expressed a desire to support both organizations and the clients they serve and inquired about items they might need as well as volunteer opportunities.

While sharing their stories, our guest speakers also reflected on the way their staff have been impacted, physically and emotionally while serving individuals who are facing and living with health issues during the time of COVID-19.

Dungeons & Dragons Series

Programs & Exhibits Supervisor Megan Young recruited instructor Emily McCabe to instruct a three-part series to connect the community through *Dungeons & Dragons*. The first two sessions, *How to Dungeon Master* and *How to Character Creation*, welcomed a total of 21 customers with a full range of experience. All players received the slides shared during the presentation as well as a list full of resource materials (and the library owns a good chunk of the books recommended!). The last session, *How to Combat*, will be held Sunday, March 7 allowing customers a chance at actual gameplay in the hopes of defeating a Manticore.

Yoga and Mindfulness for Children

Over the past year mindfulness has become an important message in children's lives and is a popular topic in children's literature. This month, the library presented two programs meant to assist children in relieving stress and learning various breathing techniques. On Saturday, February 13, local businesswoman and founder of Hop Along Yogi Kids Yoga, Laura Kowalski led a children's yoga program which focused on loving yourself and others. Her message was a positive rejoicing of life and loving the people around you. This was followed by a special storytime on Tuesday, February 16. Youth Outreach Specialist Kim McGuire presented Bend and Breathe Evening Storytime focused on relaxing, breathing and getting ready for a peaceful sleep. She read three stories that brought the ideas of mindfulness to a very young audience as well as demonstrated simple stretches and breathing techniques to help participants unwind, focus and relax.

School Info Fair

When it became obvious that the annual Preschool Information Night was not going to be able to happen the same way this year, a team was formed to adapt and expand the program to be a virtual School Information Fair. Youth Services staff members Christina Caputo, Laura Dakas, Emily Koch, Maria Papanastassiou, and Lynne Priest partnered with 40 daycares, schools and homeschool co-ops from the surrounding areas to provide valuable information to caregivers so they can make informed decisions about their children's education. Each organization provided a link to be displayed in collections on the Youth Services Wakelet, which have almost 500 combined views. Parents had a week to view the resources prior to a live Zoom event on the evening of February 8. During the event, representatives from the organizations were given their own breakout rooms, and the 70 participants had an opportunity to visit the breakout rooms to ask questions of the representatives.

Remembrall Wizarding Trivia Challenge

Over the course of seven days, February 1-7, 402 teams participated in daily trivia challenges that tested the knowledge of *Harry Potter* enthusiasts on the book series. Using the CrowdPurr trivia platform, Youth Services staff carefully crafted questions that both delighted and befuddled *Harry Potter* fans of all ages. Twenty-three amazing teams returned for each of the seven days, as each day was dedicated to one of the seven books in the series. One Champion was named daily, with a special seven-day champion selected among the teams who participated every day in this week-long event for the families, friend groups and individuals who love these books.

Harry Potter Trivia Night

There are few better ways to spend a Friday night than playing *Harry Potter Trivia!* On Friday, February 5, seventy-five teams of adults and families logged in to test their Harry Potter knowledge. Dressed as Professor Lupin, *FanCon* trivia master Anthony Mele returned as our host. Inciting *Hogwarts House* rivalries, and throwing in additional trivia facts in between questions, Anthony added a perfect mix of participation via YouTube chat. Graphics Designer Colleen Mele ran the YouTube stream on the back end while Megan Young, Programs & Exhibits Supervisor, answered host and customer questions relating to the program and the library. With participation spanning from Arlington Heights to other countries, it is clear that nothing gets customers going quite like testing their “HP” knowledge and defending their House.

Introduction to Calligraphy

With February comes perfect weather to stay home and learn a new skill! On February 10, 128 people logged in to learn the basics of calligraphy with instructor Audrey Ra. Attendees had the opportunity to pick up art supplies at the library before the program. Each packet included a calligraphy pen, calligraphy paper and instructions. Programs & Exhibits Specialist Tracy Recklaus and Supervisor Megan Young moderated questions in the chat and encouraged participants in their creative pursuit. Audrey demonstrated each lowercase letter, the different pen motions and allowed time for practice. At the end of the session, she took requests, which included writing out the words “books”, “love” and “Loki”.

Romance Readers Roundtable

Readers Advisors hosted the Romance Readers Roundtable on Saturday, Feb 13, which also happened to be Galentine's Day. Thirteen attendees enjoyed an afternoon of all things romance books, including a presentation created by advisors that discussed the history and evolution of the genre, followed by a special edition of bingo. Participants were eager to share their favorite books and authors with the group. Comments were overwhelmingly positive, with many thanks for the library offering such a fun program.

Grow With Google: Using Google Meet for Web Conferencing

Digital Services Advisor Mini Radhakrishnan taught the virtual program Grow With Google: Using Google Meet for Web Conferencing on February 16. The class taught how to schedule, host and join an event on Google Meet. Various Meet settings, screen share abilities and extensions were covered. The class had eleven participants.

Favorite Things Gaining Steam!

Launched in summer 2020, *Favorite Things* is a 45-minute monthly event to discuss books, movies and music on *Zoom*. A group of library staff (librarians, Info Services Advisors and collection pros!) share their recommendations after which attendees are encouraged to contribute the things they've been reading, watching and listening to. Throughout 2020 small groups were very happy to see the familiar faces of library staff and talk about books and more. By late 2020, audiences were growing in numbers and regulars emerging. To evolve the series in 2021, Info Services Advisor Neal Parker developed monthly themes. February's theme, *Favorite Things: Binge-Watch Edition*, attracted 20 participants! The event was facilitated by Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and included recommendations from Info Services Advisors Joan Lasky, Jon Freier and Lucy Sears. Attendees jumped in to contribute and discuss more than thirty recommendations for binge-watchable shows, all of which were compiled by staff and emailed to attendees following the live event. This is definitely a topic people like to talk about and will be featured on March's podcast edition. Some rewarding feedback from our February attendees:

Loved it. Rare that Zooms are so interactive. Can't say enough good things about it.

It was very interesting to hear a diversity of recommendations. Nice program!

I enjoyed the program. It was entertaining and now I have a long list of programs to watch.

How to Use Screen Capture Software

Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith taught the virtual program How to Use Screen Capture Software on February 10. In it, participants learned about the various ways they can record and stream from their home computer, using software like Powerpoint, OBS, Zoom, Screencastify and Quicktime. The topic is very useful now that more residents work from home and cannot do in-person computer demonstrations. The class had 15 participants.

Senior and Accessible Services Programs

Senior and Accessible Services (SAS) staff facilitated a wide variety of programs in February from monthly senior book and film discussions and computer interest group to weekly phone-in story discussions, current events discussions, and senior Zoom classes.

In all, 550 participants enjoyed the 22 programs and classes planned, facilitated, and hosted by SAS in February.

Making a Romantic Card

Digital Services Advisor Lee Anne Davis taught the virtual program Making a Romantic Card on February 3. The program went over the basics of Adobe Illustrator and taught quick techniques to turn a photo into a lovely and romantic card by adding text and other effects. The class had 12 participants.



Social Media Engagement – February 2021

	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February
Facebook													
Posts	22	56	60	47	41	56	15	40	33	42	38	28	43
Fans ¹	5,113	5,217	5,291	5,376	5,436	5,469	5,520	5,563	5,610	5,638	5,647	5,670	5,691
Engagements	1,723	3,531	3,642	2,725	3,148	1,886	861	2,581	2,850	1,677	2,295	1,733	3,029
Impressions												57,082	59,948
Twitter													
Tweets	51	111	139	148	143	137	100	127	120	118	101	117	117
Followers ¹	4,324	4,362	4,388	4,404	4,410	4,424	4,446	4,444	4,442	4,461	4,474	4,462	4,471
Engagements	203	534	394	399	387	283	240	366	324	340	322	1,289	1,207
Impressions												83,333	69,972
Instagram													
Posts ¹	n/a	859	875	898	922	978	1,002	1,027	1,055	1,080	1,112	26	43
Followers ¹	1,802	1,852	1,904	1,947	2,006	2,081	2,106	2,129	2,154	2,179	2,210	2,229	2,257
Engagements	286	485	451	435	459	560	344	389	318	425	502	1,355	1,395
Impressions												20,797	27,864
Constant Contact													
Campaigns	19	22	27	26	27	21	17	15	18	16	13	14	18
Sends	44,518	127,872	85,980	43,351	110,385	52,314	39,158	63,951	47,932	92,920	46,325	94,378	66,199
Open rate	28%	45%	36%	28%	34%	24%	27%	31%	26%	39%	32%	34%	29%
Total contacts ¹	31,790	32,650	32,957	33,157	33,594	33,721	33,889	33,897	33,989	34,044	35,274	36,083	35,869
LinkedIn													
Followers ¹	657	659	660	672	684	685	689	693	696	707	712	716	721
Posts	1	5	1	1	8	0	7	4	8	0	1	9	1
Impressions	308	839	620	235	738	352	1,100	749	992	298	313	1,000	420
YouTube													
Subscribers ¹	402	456	514	585	603	627	658	691	723	747	765	796	812
Videos added ²	3	6	23	34	33	30	15	21	19	18	14	12	14
Views	1,821	2,875	5,102	5,053	3,202	3,086	2,900	3,159	3,763	2,859	2,443	2,803	2,656
Watch time (hours)	64	83	452	437	293	306	131	258	418	275	230	338	296.8

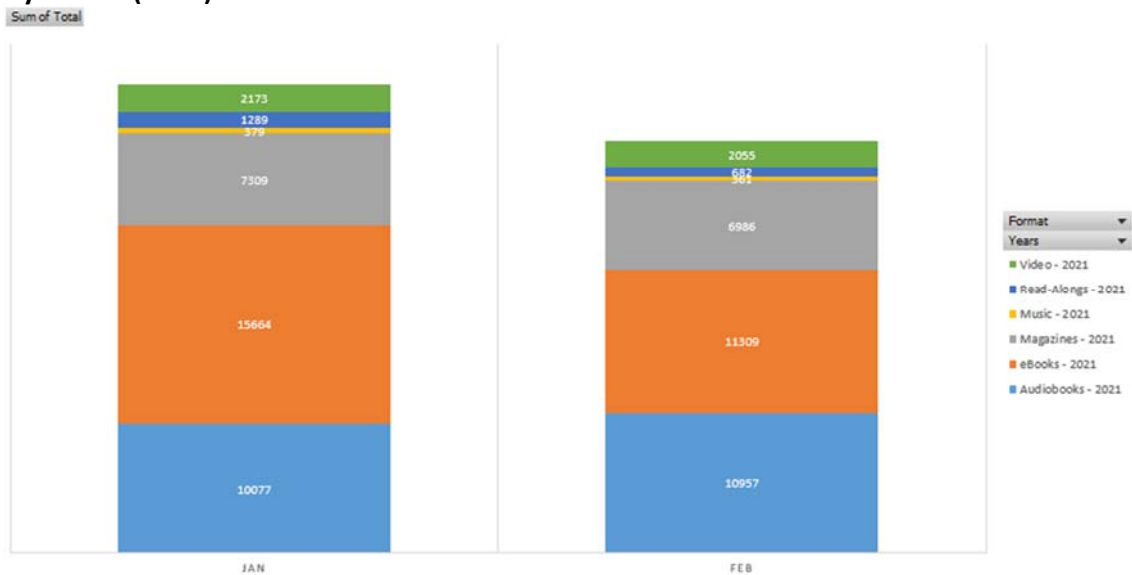
¹Cumulative

²September – December includes unlisted videos

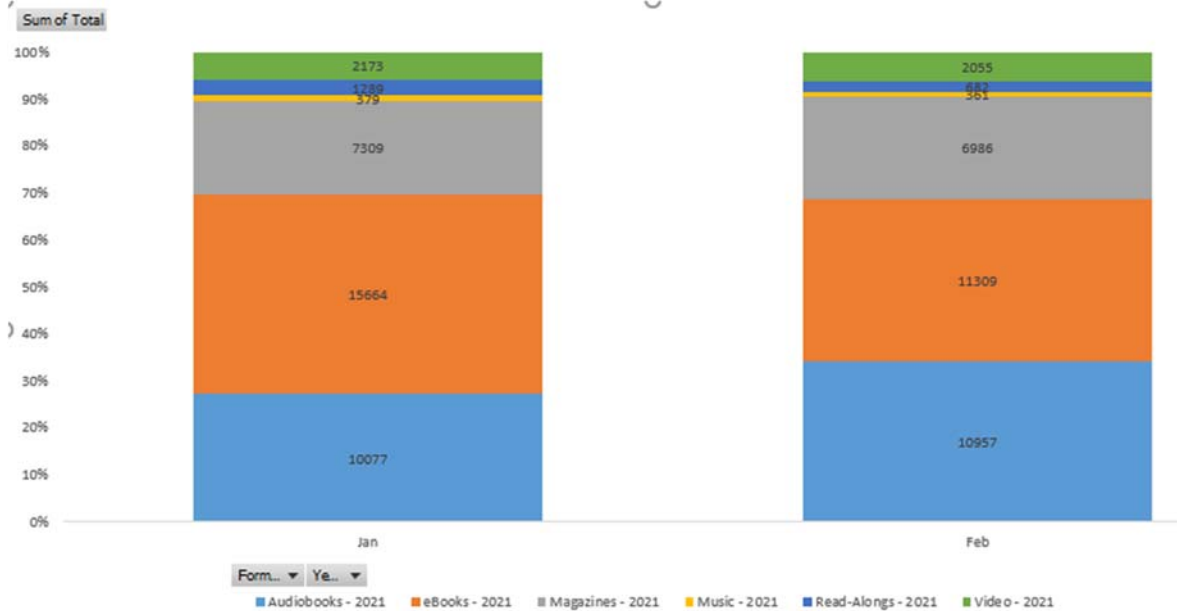
February eResource overview

eLibrary 2020/2021	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21
Total eBook checkouts	11,785	11,375	10,463	11,839	10,852	11,271	10,870	11,746	15,237	10,750
Total eAudio checkouts	4,415	4,338	3,893	6,391	6,308	6,381	6,325	6562	10,077	10,957

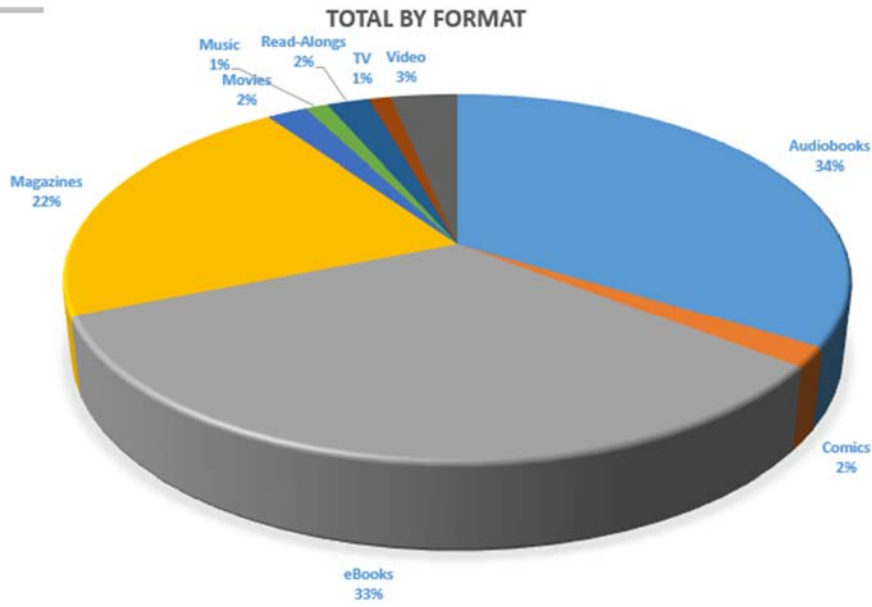
Formats by Month (Total)



Formats by Month (Percentages)



Row Labels	Sum of Total
Audiobooks	10957
Comics	559
eBooks	10750
Magazines	6986
Movies	643
Music	361
Read-Alongs	682
TV	344
Video	1068
Grand Total	32350



Professional Engagement

Vice President of LACONI, Alison Lowery

In addition to serving as Vice President for the Reference and Adult Services Section (RASS) of the Library Administrators Conference of Northern Illinois (LACONI), Info Services Librarian Alison Lowery is now Vice President of LACONI. In her role as vice president, she be working closely with the LACONI President, Programs and Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka, to create and shape the strategic direction of LACONI and achieve organizational goals, such as fleshing out a new website, laconi.net, and crafting best practices.

Recharge Committee

Material Handling supervisor Matt Williams joined the [Recharge Committee](#), an independent networking and professional development group that provides free continuing education in the Chicago area to inspire library leaders at all levels.

Certified Dementia Practitioner certification

SAS Supervisor Katie Myers, renewed her National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP) Certified Dementia Practitioner (CDP) certification by completing the requisite ten contact hours of continuing education units (CEU). CEU training included utilizing the library's database Gale Courses, where she completed a certificate in Music Therapy and Sound Healing.

2021 North American Virtual Reference Conference

Digital Services Librarian Bill Pardue and Christina Giovanelli-Caputo presented At Home Learners and Homeschoolers, Altering Services for the 2021 North American Virtual Reference Conference.

Alignable’s Local Businessperson of the Year, Diane Malik

Business Services Advisor Diane Malik is an active member of the business networking site Alignable, and in a recent vote she was recently named by local members to be the “Local Businessperson of the Year.” While this is an emerging platform, this honor is a great positive for Diane and the library.



Local Businessperson of 2021

Customer Comments

- *“I want you to know how grateful I am for all the wonderful online opportunities that are currently being offered. You and the Arlington Heights Library Staff are doing an exceptional job in helping us survive and flourish during this extremely difficult time.”*
- *"AHML is lucky to have such dedicated and caring staff like you and Amy to help facilitate these programs and make an impact in the lives of others" - a community member who observed a group program to learn more about what we do.*
- *“I participated in Catalina’s “Hablemos Espanol ” this evening and really enjoyed it. She did a good job of engaging the group with differing backgrounds in Spanish. I hope she will do it on a regular basis!” - a happy program participant.*

- *"Many thanks for being a critique. I appreciate your explanation in my mistakes. Also, I am looking forward to having another opportunity to make my presentation!"* - a student.
- *"The AHML is one of our very favorite things about living in Arlington Heights."* - a lifelong resident.
- A customer left a glowing voicemail expressing her gratitude for the help of Digital Services Advisor Rich Fabits. *"I just had the most wonderful experience with the young man, Rich, talking to me today about how to cut and paste! I am a dinosaur with the computer and he was so marvelous, so patient, so good at explaining. I am so thrilled I just can't tell you how happy I am with this young man who helped me so much... I just wanted you to know how incredibly helpful and patient he was, it's like talking to a friend. I am an 85-year-old widow, as I said a dinosaur, and I am trying to come out of the woods here. I am so thankful! I would like you to give him an accolade or two about just how incredible he is."*