

## Executive Director's Report March 2021

### What's New @ AHML

#### Early Learning Kits



*Early Learning Kits* are available for check out in Kids' World! Designed for families to bring library fun and learning home, the kits continue to build on our *Family Place Library* initiative and support families on their journey to develop their children's social, emotional and cognitive skills, in the comfort of their own home. *Baby Kits* explore different themes that infants are naturally interested in. *Toddler Kits* engage inquisitive two-year-old customers with toy food, letters and numbers as well as social skill building themes like transitions times or learning to share. *Caregiver Kits* explore topics like loss of a loved one, confidence building and new baby.

*Early Learning Kits* were developed by Early Literacy Services Supervisor Rebecca King with support from Youth Services and Collection Services staff. Within the first week the collection was available, all items were checked out! Special thanks to Acquisitions Assistant Heidi Langele, Collection Specialist Candy Rossin, Cataloging Supervisor Gosia Bylinska and Processing Supervisor Lena Bulakh for their extra work in the creation of this collection.

### Diversity and Inclusion

#### Northwest Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (NWHCC)

As a member of the *Northwest Hispanic Chamber of Commerce* (NWHCC), Bilingual Advisor Catalina Shin joined the organization's Event & Marketing meeting for planning the year ahead. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss upcoming NWHCC events, such as "El Cafecito", speed networking events, *Hispanic Heritage Month* and *End of the Year Gala*.

### **Women & Children's Center (WCC)**

On March 30, Specialty Info Services Advisor Catalina Shin met with staff from the *Women's & Children's Center (WCC)* to address needs students have expressed regarding ESL, literacy, and other life skills. Staff from WCC shared there are a large number of Spanish speakers taking GED and citizenship classes. ESL and Literacy staff may offer other components such as: Assistance with resume writing for ESL professionals, Job interview preparations, and business & social media. Catalina will coordinate with Business Advisor Diane Malik to possibility offer monthly workshops to students.

### **ESL Book Club Pilot**

In response to ESL student requests for more book discussions, the *ESL Book Club* was created. This is in addition to the ESL department's monthly book discussion. The first two of four pilot sessions debuted in March, featuring *From Scratch* by Gail Anderson-Dargatz.

### **Virtual Book Buddies**

ESL Advisor Amy Duffey and ESL/Literacy Services Coordinator Tracy Karim each co-hosted a *Virtual Book Buddies* session with Youth Services Librarian Evan Mathers and Youth Services Supervisor Alice Son. *Virtual Book Buddies* is for kids in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and especially great for kids learning English as a new language. Some adult *English Language Learner* customers register their children for this program. It is wonderful to be able to support families as they grow their language skills.

## **Outreach and Community Engagement**

### **Virtual Kids' World Tours**

Since most schools are not participating in offsite field trips, Youth Services outreach staff brought Kids' World virtually to kindergarten and first grade classrooms of Ivy Hill Elementary School. Lead Youth Outreach Specialist Laura Dakas prepared about 100 activity bags to distribute prior to the virtual tour. Using an iPad, Youth Outreach Librarian Emily Koch and Youth Outreach Specialists Kim McGuire and Emily Muszynski virtually toured Kids' World with each class. The dog cut outs held the audience's attention, with instructions to draw a spot or stripe on their dog for each Kids' World location highlighted, mimicking the format of in-person tours.

## Online and In Library Display Highlight Women’s History Month

The Featured Books and DVD display topic was “*Phenomenal Women*” in celebration of *Women’s History Month* and had 396 items checked out. Online lists included *Phenomenal Women* in celebration of *Women’s History month*. The lists included Women in [Fiction Writers](#), [Poetry](#), [Music](#), [Science](#), [Directors](#), [Biographies](#) and [Memoirs](#).



## Outreach at Stonebridge Bookmobile Stop

The Stonebridge of Arlington Heights apartments stop is a busy and well-organized operation. To better support these library users, Youth Services outreach staff began presenting Kids’ World popups in conjunction with the bookmobile stop. Staff provide readers’ advisory, place items on hold, check out additional materials and distribute activity kits/giveaways. Customers love the extra interaction and browsing items while waiting to board the bookmobile.



*Youth Outreach Specialists Kim McGuire and Emily Muszynski complete a successful evening at Stonebridge, checking out all circulating items brought to the popup.*

## Serving our Community

### **Candidate Forums Continue to Draw Crowds Virtually**

Info Services Supervisor Elizabeth Ludemann collaborated with Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Programs & Exhibits Supervisor Megan Young to partner with the local chapter of the *League of Women Voters* for local election candidate forums. The library hosted forums with candidates from three races, each highly attended:

- Village of Arlington Heights Trustee: 225
- School District 25: 229
- School District 214: 166

[The event garnered local media coverage, as well.](#) In a survey, many of the attendees commented on how seamless and well-run the event experience was, complimented the student moderators and emcees, and expressed gratitude for learning about the candidates' policy stances. Of the survey respondents, 91% indicated the event made them feel more prepared for the election.

### **Electronic Device Drive Returns**

The high school students who coordinated the electronic device drive in August-September 2020, who go by the name *Devices4U*, requested the library host another donation site due to the success of the last drive. The drive collects donations of lightly used laptops, Chromebooks and iPads to be reformatted and donated to school systems in need during remote learning. The drive will run throughout the month of April.



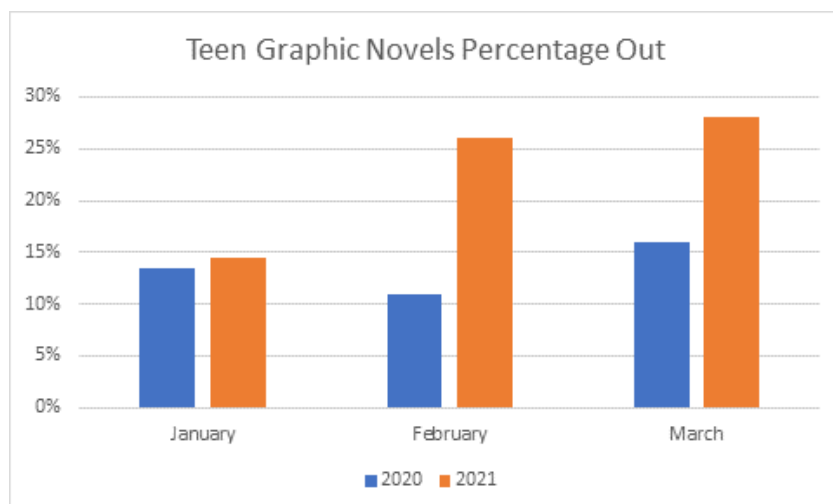
### AHPD Vaccine Clinic

On March 31, Circulation Assistants Mary Weber and Rokshana Akhter-Azim, Executive Director Mike Driskell, Info Services Assistant Laura Wiertel and Info Services Librarian Barb Powers volunteered to support Arlington Heights Park District’s COVID-19 vaccine program that took place at Arlington Ridge Center. Over 1,000 shots were given out that day! Several library staff were able to receive their first vaccine dose during the event.



### Measured Success of Moving Teen Graphic Novels

In November 2020, Collection Services, Teen Services and Materials Handling staff worked together to move the Teen Graphic Novels from inside the Hub to shelving directly outside of the Hub. Since the teen graphic novel collection has been moved out of the Hub, the library has seen significant increases in the percentage of the collection checked out in January through March 2021 as compared to that same time in 2020 (pre-pandemic closure numbers!).





## **Program Highlights**

### **Family Cooking: Sweet and Savory Nachos with Kristyn Slick**

Kristyn Slick from *Mealtime Memories* returned to present a one-hour program that brought families together in the kitchen on Saturday, March 20. The recipes, as well as required basic kitchen tools, were made available to customers prior to the event. Select ingredients were provided upon request making this program truly inclusive. Twenty families, 45 people in all, attended this Zoom program ready to cook. When the families signed off, each was able to enjoy a treat they had created together.

### **Kombucha Brewing Workshop**

Presented by certified Culinary Nutrition Expert and Instructor Michelle Marshall, 59 attendees learned about the health benefits of kombucha. People had a variety of questions, from intricate "making" questions to evaluating commercially available kombucha in stores. Michelle began the workshop by going over required ingredients, the process involved and what type of containers should be used when home brewing.

### **Vegetable Gardening 101**

Horticulturist Sharon Yiesla returned to present another popular gardening event on Sunday, March 14. Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Info Services Advisor Alisa Stanfield welcomed an excited group of 116 gardeners with a great desire to learn. Gardeners shared tips with one another while Sharon discussed everything required to prepare a successful vegetable garden. Attendees shared:

*“I loved this presenter. She was so knowledgeable, and the information was given in a straight forward manner.”*

*“I loved the hand-outs. I learned a lot from the discussion. I'm glad that we could ask questions.”*

*“I thought the speaker was well prepared and provided many insights that I had not previously considered. Loved it.”*

*“I have not grown vegetables before so this presentation was an excellent primer.”*

## Fort & Flashlights Fun!

Youth Services Advisors Sara Prince and Jan Pinotti brought back a little old-fashioned family fun with an evening program for families. Activities included creating forts, flashlight games, shadow puppet fun and a campfire singalong. Customers were eager to share photos of their completed forts, some pictured below.



## **Craftivism with March's Maker Shannon Downey**

Meet the Maker continued in March introducing the community to various ways to make and people who make. We welcomed former Chicagoan, now roving maker Shannon Downey, an embroideress and activist who uses embroidery as a tool for social change. Joining us from her RV in Austin, TX, Shannon was scheduled to present one hands-on workshop on Zoom and join us for a conversation about Craftivism on Instagram Live. After the workshop quickly filled, a second was added by demand to welcome more people into a hands-on making space and generate additional interest and engagement as we prepare to open the makerspace. A total of 52 people had a chance to spend their Friday night stitching with Shannon and one another. These workshops blended a history of craftivism, an overview of the tools used in embroidery, encouragement to create something unique, and time to stitch together, talk and share. Several attendees tagged us on social media to show off their creations following the event. On Instagram Live, Shannon joined Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka in conversation and a new record number of people connected with this event, 67 viewed the live conversation and an additional 1,007 viewed the recorded event.

All workshop attendees received an event survey and shared the following satisfaction and impact:

*“Shannon was amazing! She was engaging and fun. I really enjoyed learning about the craftivism movement. I left the program feeling inspired (and with a new embroidered piece ready to hang!) and excited to see what I can create.”*

*“I LOVED this program - one of the best I have participated in at AHML. Shannon was so much fun and it was such a treat to be able to learn more about her work and ask her questions.”*

*“Instructor was a good teacher. Explained everything very simply. She told good stories and I love to hear how she has used her talent to inspire change.”*

## **Tips for Buying Online**

Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith taught the virtual program *Tips for Buying Online* on Tuesday, March 16. The class covered buying online for the uninitiated. Attendees learned tips when buying items on sites such as Craigslist, eBay, Facebook Marketplace, OfferUp and Etsy. The class had 11 participants.



### **Create a Visual Novel with Twine**

Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith taught the virtual program *Create a Visual Novel with Twine* on Tuesday, March 9. Customers learned about *Twine*, a free open-source tool that is commonly used to create interactive story telling experiences similar to video games. Customers with an interest in creating text and narrative based video games or finding new ways to tell and share interactive stories learned about this useful software. The class had 8 participants.

### **Make a Photo Slideshow with iMovie**

Digital Services Advisor Lee Anne Davis taught the virtual program *Make a Photo Slideshow with iMovie* on Wednesday, March 31. Customers learned how to use iMovie on a Mac computer or mobile device to turn existing photos into a movie to share with friends and family. The class had 16 attendees.

### **Secret Chicago: The Weird, Wonderful & Obscure**

On Thursday, March 25, an incredible 367 viewers came out for an evening event with photographer Jessica Mlinaric based on her book *Secret Chicago: The Weird, Wonderful and Obscure*. Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Info Services Librarian Alison Lowery hosted the program, managing chats while the author presented. Jessica shared the lesser-known secrets of Chicago. Her visuals included original photos of the sites and haunts she discussed. Attendees were appreciative of the local, niche content and requested more programming like it. When asked “How would you rate tonight’s event,” attendees indicated 4.61 --- Between Very Good (4) and Excellent! (5).  
Additional praise and thanks:

*“great speaker and a good idea for a zoom presentation - thanks ahml!”*

*“this program was great...very interesting, well presented  
and the hour flew by very quickly.”*

*“This was a really fun program! The presentation was great and I learned a lot.”*

*“Thank you for all you have been doing to arrange interesting programs.”*

## **Genealogy Program Highlights Local Resources**

Genealogy and Local History Librarian Jaymie Middendorf hosted a program on Tuesday, March 23 featuring a speaker from the Illinois State Archives to highlight their unique resources and tools for genealogists doing research in the state. The program was highly informative and received many compliments, including:

*“Extremely informative, an excellent overview of this resource and the kinds of records that are available.”*

*“David was fantastic! He gave us a vast amount of information on what is available in the IL State Archives! ...THANKS for offering this program, as I know what is available if I should need it in the future.”*

## **Modern Classics Book Discussion Group**

Library Delivery and Accessibility Supervisor Katie Myers led a book discussion on Monday, March 8 of *Hidden Valley Road* by Robert Kolker, which tells the story of a midcentury American family with twelve children, six of them diagnosed with schizophrenia.

In the evaluation, many of the group took time to share comments about their participation in this Senior and Accessible Services staff-led group:

*“Very good. Pleased with discussion leaders.”*

*“Good discussion about a very challenging book.”*

*“Excellent discussion about a very difficult read.”*

*“I am a long-term member of this group and enjoy discussing books with the people I know. The discussion always brings out issues that I may have missed or points of view that differ from mine, which to me is important.”*

## Social Media Engagement – March 2021

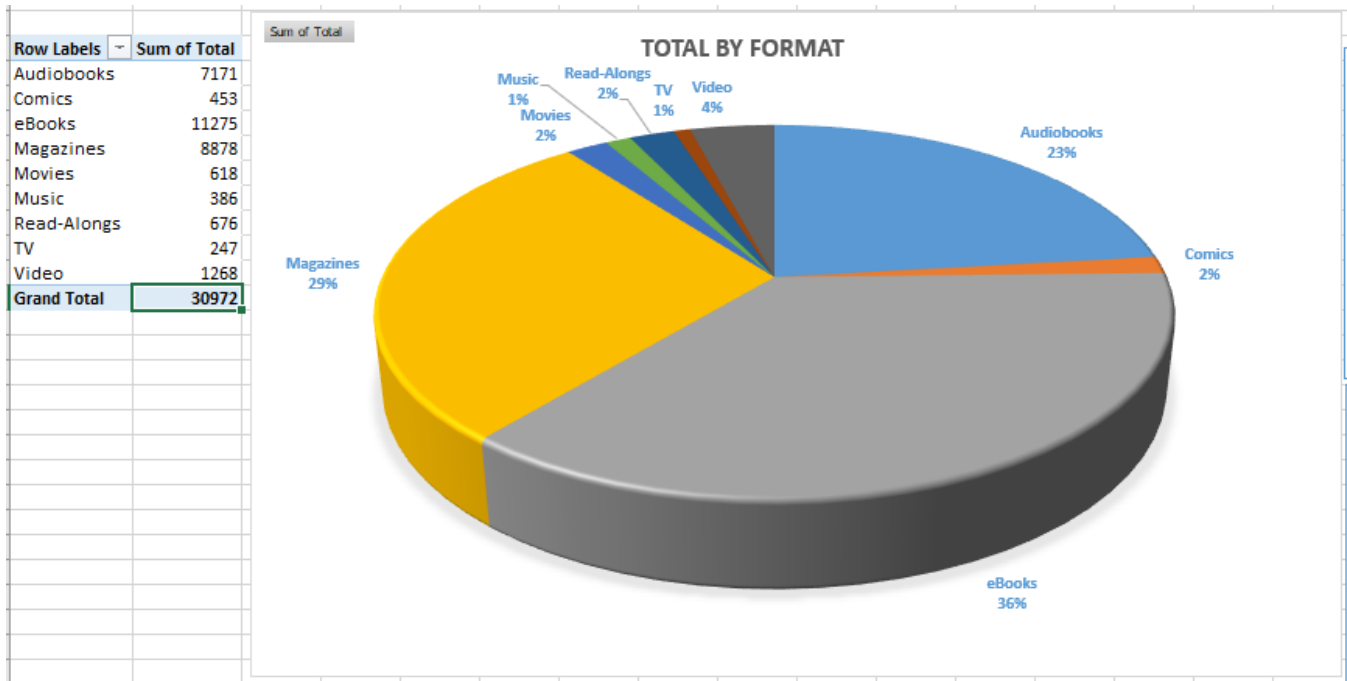
	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
<b>Facebook</b>													
Posts	56	60	47	41	56	15	40	33	42	38	28	43	28
Fans <sup>1</sup>	5,217	5,291	5,376	5,436	5,469	5,520	5,563	5,610	5,638	5,647	5,670	5,691	5,717
Engagements	3,531	3,642	2,725	3,148	1,886	861	2,581	2,850	1,677	2,295	1,733	3,029	3,084
Impressions											57,082	59,948	66,798
<b>Twitter</b>													
Tweets	111	139	148	143	137	100	127	120	118	101	117	117	113
Followers <sup>1</sup>	4,362	4,388	4,404	4,410	4,424	4,446	4,444	4,442	4,461	4,474	4,462	4,471	4,486
Engagements	534	394	399	387	283	240	366	324	340	322	1,289	1,207	1,688
Impressions											83,333	69,972	90,460
<b>Instagram</b>													
Posts <sup>1</sup>	859	875	898	922	978	1,002	1,027	1,055	1,080	1,112	26	43	35
Followers <sup>1</sup>	1,852	1,904	1,947	2,006	2,081	2,106	2,129	2,154	2,179	2,210	2,229	2,257	2,285
Engagements	485	451	435	459	560	344	389	318	425	502	1,355	1,395	1,162
Impressions											20,797	27,864	23,674
<b>Constant Contact</b>													
Campaigns	22	27	26	27	21	17	15	18	16	13	14	18	17
Sends	127,872	85,980	43,351	110,385	52,314	39,158	63,951	47,932	92,920	46,325	94,378	66,199	41,962
Open rate	45%	36%	28%	34%	24%	27%	31%	26%	39%	32%	34%	29%	26%
Total contacts <sup>1</sup>	32,650	32,957	33,157	33,594	33,721	33,889	33,897	33,989	34,044	35,274	36,083	35,869	36,030
<b>LinkedIn</b>													
Followers <sup>1</sup>	659	660	672	684	685	689	693	696	707	712	716	721	725
Posts	5	1	1	8	0	7	4	8	0	1	9	1	4
Impressions	839	620	235	738	352	1,100	749	992	298	313	1,000	420	554
<b>YouTube</b>													
Subscribers <sup>1</sup>	456	514	585	603	627	658	691	723	747	765	796	812	830
Videos added <sup>2</sup>	6	23	34	33	30	15	21	19	18	14	12	14	21
Views	2,875	5,102	5,053	3,202	3,086	2,900	3,159	3,763	2,859	2,443	2,803	2,656	3,061
Watch time (hrs)	83	452	437	293	306	131	258	418	275	230	338	296.8	242.3

<sup>1</sup>Cumulative

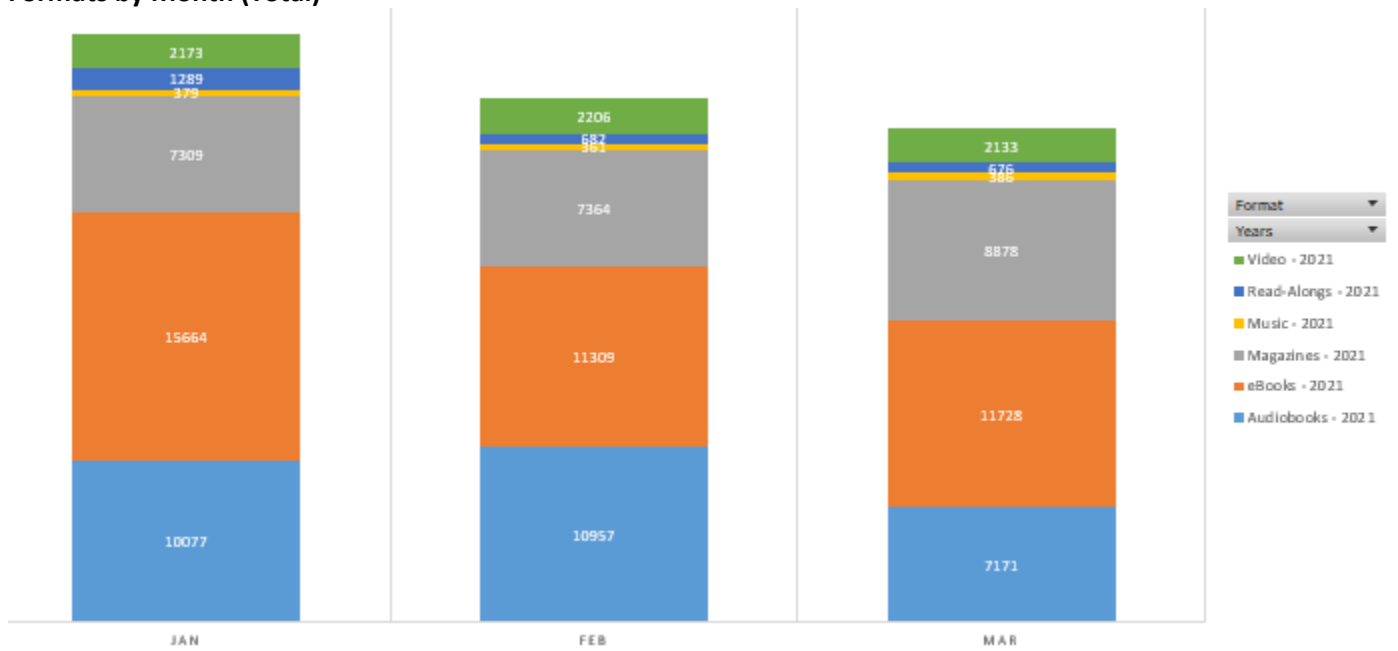
<sup>2</sup>September – December includes unlisted videos

## March 2021 eResource overview

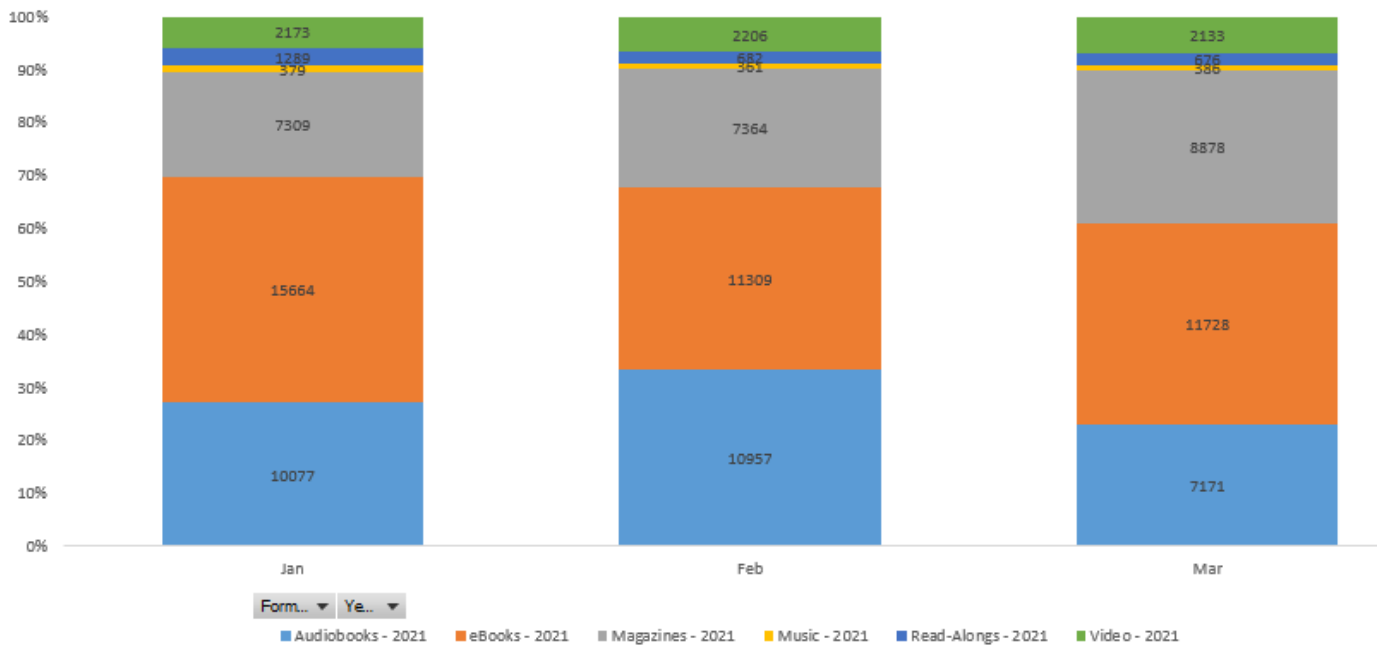
eLibrary 2020/2021	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21
Total eBook checkouts	11,375	10,463	11,839	10,852	11,271	10,870	11,746	15,237	10,750	11,275
Total eAudio checkouts	4,338	3,893	6,391	6,308	6,381	6,325	6562	10,077	10,957	7,171



### Formats by Month (Total)



### Formats by Month (Percentages)





## **Professional Engagement**

### **National Endowment for the Arts Appointment**

Youth Services Manager Trixie Dantis was recruited to serve as a grant review panelist for the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA). She will serve as a panelist for the NEA's arts education grant supporting pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### **International Women's Day Panel**

On March 18, Specialty Info Services Advisor Catalina Shin joined an International Women's Day panel at Palatine High School. With 15 participants from different industries as well as teachers and students from the high school, Catalina shared her experience of being an immigrant and ESL professional.

### **Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages - Bilingual Education Conference (ITBE)**

ESL Advisor Allie Gourley attended the virtual ITBE conference. The focus this year was equity and social justice in ESL. Available sessions included positions in the field and the ethical implications of teaching English as a second/additional/extra/international language.

### **Southern California Library and California State Library Bilingual Conference**

On March 25-26, Bilingual Advisor Catalina Shin attended a bilingual conference organized by Southern California Library and California State Library in partnerships with multiple organizations that serve the Hispanic/Latinx community for library services. The focus of the mini conference was to highlight engagement activities and libraries as an essential part of helping communities thrive.

### **Buffalo Grove Highschool Tour**

On Friday, March 5, Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager Chris Krueger toured the Buffalo Grove High School (BGHS) tech labs with the Career and Technical Education Division Head Jeff Bot. Jeff gave excellent suggestions and tips about running a commercial kitchen and industrial tool spaces. They discussed how the makerspace and BGHS can work together in the future.

## Customer Comments

*“The Kids World Staff has done an incredible job keeping programs fun and interesting for kids during this difficult time... you all have such creative ideas!”*

*“I’m writing to send compliments to your materials handling and drive-up teams. I’ve worked in libraries for 16 years and I have placed a lot of holds during that time. I can say with certainty that your materials handling team has the fastest turnaround times I’ve ever experienced! It’s very impressive and even occasionally seems like magic. And then your team working the drive-up is kind and efficient. Although our interactions are brief, they are so pleasant, and those sorts of interactions are hard to come by in the midst of this pandemic. Please send my highest compliments to these groups. I’m so thankful for their expertise and hard work.”*

*“I am so grateful that the library is open. You are doing a great job maintaining services and keeping everyone safe.”*

A note found in a very worn, returned children’s book: *“She came to us with a few loose pages that we attempted to carefully tape back in. Her condition worsened when she was snuck from her safe spot only to be found snuggled too tightly by a 3-year-old, her pages visible under the dying glow of a flashlight. If she cannot be repaired, please know her life was full of love, if brief (given her publication date). Please send medical bills my way. Sincerest condolences, mother of an aggressive reader.”*

*“Thank you, Tracy for sharing all the good resources. I hear the sirens but didn’t know what they mean and now I can be safe.”* - a Culture & Conversation student, after a session about tornado & active shooter safety.

*“This is a great use of space - it is such a good idea to have you here. I’m familiar with the Business Center and it seems like there was a lot of duplication, so it’s nice to see you in this space.”* - a walk-in, non-ESL customer who wanted to work in this space and struck up a conversation.

*“I am writing to express my thanks and appreciation for [Digital Services Manager] Jack [Bower]’s assistance on Monday, March 22, 2021. Faced with an unexpected ComEd power outage in my neighborhood, and occurring just before I was due to log-on and teach remotely, I knew I could access WiFi in time for my class if I could get to the library quickly. I drove to the library; [Info Services Advisor] Lucy [Sears] kindly provided helpful advice; connected me to Jack at the tech desk; and he patiently helped me log-on. I am grateful for the assistance of the resourceful and always-helpful AHML staff, and so happy that the library has powerful WiFi. Thanks again to Jack for his help.”*

Circulation Assistant, Lindsay McRae, shared an experience that she had this month when a customer who she recognized, came up to the checkout desk. They began signing with each other, when Lindsay remembered that Circulation Supervisor, Megan Maier, had obtained some masks with a clear mouth from Senior & Accessible Services. Lindsay asked the customer to wait a minute while she went in back to grab something (the mask). When she came out with it on, the customer immediately got tears in her eyes. She told Lindsay how much that had made her WEEK since everywhere she goes, she cannot see anyone’s face. Deaf Culture is about being able to read facial expressions, and part of understanding, for some, is signing with facial/mouth expressions. The customer walked out of the library with a spring in her step and, according to her, a smile on her face. Lindsay also added how grateful she is to the person who made these masks. They have become extremely helpful, and she even used another one to speak with a man who is deaf and does not sign but only reads lips.