



Executive Director's Report

June 2021

What's New @ AHML

Phase 5 Changes

On Friday, June 11, the State of Illinois moved into Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois mitigation plan. In response, the library removed capacity limits and many other mitigation restrictions. All tables and chairs were placed back to their original, pre-COVID configurations and the café and water fountains were reopened. The public computers have been moved back to the computer area. Some computers remain out of service to allow for optional social distancing. Computer sessions were expanded to two-hour reservations with extensions in one-hour increments. In-building programming resumed June 10.

Adult Summer Reading Begins

Info Services Librarians Alison Lowery and Lev Kalmens worked with Info Services Advisor Sherri Tader to plan and launch "Page Turners", the adult summer reading program for 2021. The program is available the months of June, July and August. Each month, participants complete a handful of activities by reading and connecting with other readers in the community to earn a badge for a chance to win a gift card to a local restaurant. Two hundred and forty-eight people have registered for the program, and 86 earned the June badge by completing at least five activities.



Page Turners Adult Summer Reading 2021

Jun 1, 2021 - Aug 31, 2021

Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge kicked off on June 7 for customers from birth through grade 12. In the month of June alone, 1,384 kids, tweens and teens registered to participate in the challenge and read all summer long while earning prizes along the way! This surpasses 2020's total participation numbers by 411 participants. The program also requires our young readers to complete activities that include building a fort, reading to a pet and sending snail mail to friends.



New iPad minis



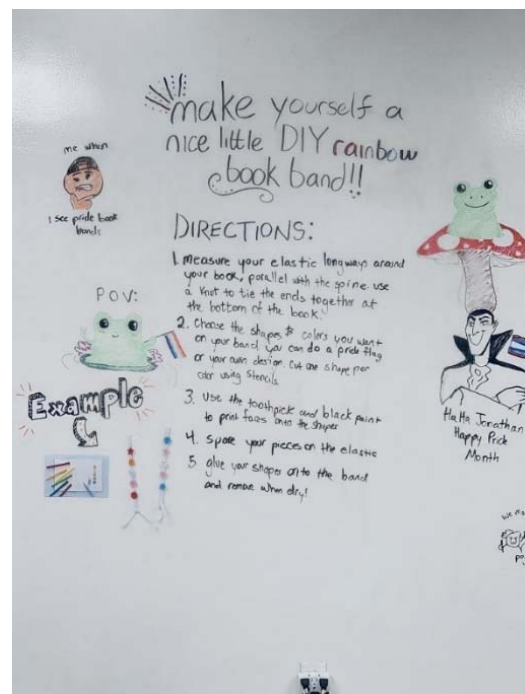
Collaboration between Collection Services, Community and Circulation Services and Youth Services staff resulted in the introduction of 16 iPad minis to the collection. Each iPad mini has an empty case that is out on the shelf for customers to take to the Checkout Desk where Circulation staff will match the iPad mini equipment for checkout.

Children's Playaways

Children's Playaways, a small device the size that holds one audiobook and only requires headphones to listen, hit the shelves on June 22. Within two weeks, all were checked out! These are great for kids who might not have a device that can stream/download and aren't familiar with CD's. Twenty-nine Playaways were initially ordered, but due to their popularity an additional 18 have been ordered. As of July 15, 75% of the initial 29 were checked out. Adult Playaways are currently not part of the collection.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

To celebrate Pride Month, Youth Services staff highlighted resources for youth audiences through book lists and displays in Kids' World and the Hub as well as a rainbow themed storytime promoting diversity and acceptance. In partnership with Arlington Heights Park District, the library installed a storywalk featuring the book [Our Rainbow](#). In the Hub, staff provided instructions and supplies for DIY Rainbow Book Bands – 68 teen customers visited and crafted them throughout the month.



DEI Resources

Info Services Advisors worked with Communications and Marketing to promote reading lists for Juneteenth and Pride Month.

SPOTLIGHT ON JUNETEENTH - BOOK AND MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS ▶



June 19, 1865 is the day when the last enslaved people in the United States were told they were free in Galveston, Texas - two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. June 19 is now known as Juneteenth, a holiday that commemorates the end of slavery and celebrates African American freedom, culture and achievements. Juneteenth is celebrated annually throughout the United States and in observance, we've put together a list of fiction and nonfiction books and movies:

- [Juneteenth - Books](#)
- [Juneteenth - Movies](#)

Learn more about Juneteenth: [_____](#)

PRIDE MONTH RESOURCES AND READING LISTS ▶



June is Pride Month and we've recently put together several curated lists of books and films to celebrate and better understand current events and the history of LGBTQ+ rights in America. We've put together lists for kids, tweens, teens and adults to enjoy.

These lists include books like *Call Me by Your Name* by André Aciman, *Honey Girl* by Morgan Rogers, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong and *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* by Jeanette Winterson, and films like *Love, Simon*, *Moonlight* and *Rafiki*.

- [Pride Month - Kids](#)
- [Pride Month - Tweens](#)
- [Pride Month - Teens](#)
- [Pride Month - Adults](#)
- [Pride Month - Movies](#)

- To support the Village of Arlington Heights proclamation designating June 2021 as LGBTQ+ Pride Month, Collection Supervisor Cyndi Hamann created a cloudLibrary shelf called Pride Month.
- In response to questions from learners, ESL and Literacy Services held a Culture and Conversation session on pronouns as they relate to gender to raise awareness of general diversity and the LGBTQ+ community in the United States.

Generating Pride Month visibility through Pop-Up events

Programs and Exhibits staff Natalie Brottman, Neal Parker and Jennifer Czajka supported the Village of Arlington Heights and the library in celebrating Pride Month by hosting two pop-ups in June. The first was on June 12 at the Farmers Market, alongside the bookmobile. It included a display of pride-themed books for all ages as well as the opportunity for customers to take or make pride-themed buttons. Fifty-five customers attended, and both children and parents alike were delighted by their button creations.



The second pop-up occurred June 30 at the library, featuring a large display of



books and movies for all ages, with additional focus on resources from local organizations that support LGBTQ+ youth and families. Several of these resources were added to the library's Pride webpage. Staff received comments at both pop-ups expressing gratitude that the library was actively celebrating Pride Month.

Circulation and Info Services staff shared thanks from community members who picked up buttons at service desks throughout the month. Four hundred and fifty buttons of varying designs were distributed.

Return to In-Person Tutoring

June marked a return to in-person tutoring for ESL and literacy customers. The ESL office has seen an overall increase in visits, as well as phone calls and emails asking about services for families with kids and teens.

Serving Our Community

Weekly Senior Phone Story Discussion

Weekly phone discussions for homebound residents continues to be a huge success as it retains regular attendees who appreciate the program *“for the friendships it has helped them form this last year.”*

Four new participants appreciate the group activity as COVID mitigations continue to limit in-person gatherings in some senior living communities. One of the new participants shared that she will be 101 years old in July and is happy for a new activity! The group recently discussed Ann Patchett’s beloved dog from her book, *This is the Story of a Happy Marriage*. After the program, a customer called to say how much she enjoyed all the laughter and reminiscing about pets. She said she enjoys the program so much that whenever someone calls to plan a visit she says, *“But not on Tuesday afternoons!”*

Lutheran Home – Resumes In-Person Monthly Visits and Library Day



After more than a year of being unable to visit in-person, Senior and Accessible Services (SAS) staff resumed in-person library visits on Monday, June 21.

Residents shared their feedback during room-to-room visits:

“The materials kept me sane during this trying time.”

“Thank goodness for library materials, I look forward to them every month.”

SAS staff Katie Myers and Janet McDonnell hosted a Virtual Library Day visit on Zoom that was streamed via CCTV to resident rooms throughout Lutheran Home. Katie and Janet shared information about how to sign-up for library service, the monthly on-site library visits directly to resident rooms, information about the Illinois State Library Talking Book service and talked about some of the books highlighted on the SAS summer reading list.

DIY Lemonade Stand

June saw the re-opening of the Hub's DIY area where teens can access markers, paper, scissors and other supplies to make! Three entrepreneurial teens took the opportunity to use the DIY area to create a lemonade stand sign. With a business plan in place, they invited Hub staff to visit their stand and receive a discount on lemonade.



Record High Book Me Requests

In June, Info Services Advisors curated 37 Book Me requests, the highest monthly number to date.

“Thanks for the book list. Seriously I love the list. I started reading some the books mentioned in the list. I am glad that I used book me service. Absolutely fantastic for readers like me as I was stuck with my favorite authors. But after this list I’m growing with different authors. Thank you for being so helpful.”

Native Wildflowers

Horticulturist Sharon Yiesla returned to educate and entertain 54 gardeners on Monday, June 21. Sharon presented a wealth of information pertaining to native wildflowers including environmental benefits and important considerations when starting your own native garden.

Virtual Bingo Returns!

Resident bingo caller and Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski entertained 38 customers on a rainy Friday night. Customers picked up packets that included Bingo cards, a dauber and an instruction card. Customers unable to pick-up the packet still enjoyed participating with digital Bingo cards, although were not eligible for prizes. Programs and Exhibits Supervisor Megan Young contacted all winners after the program with their prizes! Winners received gift cards to local Arlington Heights restaurants and confectionaries: Berry Yo, Kilwin's, Armand's, Scratchboard Kitchen and Tuscan Market.

33 1/3 Series kicks off with Aretha Franklin's *Amazing Grace*

June 23 marked the debut of a new, year-long series presented in partnership with Addison Public Library, Glenview Public Library and Northbrook Public Library. The series brings together music fans through celebration of the 33 1/3 book collection -- a series of pocket-sized books about beloved albums published by Bloomsbury. Programs and Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker managed all technical and logistical requirements for the evening. Aaron Cohen, music writer, professor at City Colleges of Chicago and author of Aretha Franklin's *Amazing Grace*, discussed the significance of the seminal record with moderator Michael White from the Glenview Public Library. Aaron shared the process of making the record, played never-before-heard interviews with Aretha Franklin's band members and fielded several rounds of questions. Ninety-three customers attended. Many engaged in chat with questions and comments. The program was recorded and has been viewed more than 100 times on YouTube. The video can be viewed [here](#). Attendees praised Aaron's generous demeanor and the series --

"Thank you for expanding this to a year-long series. I plan to attend every one of them."

"It is a great idea for a series. It was informative and very entertaining and interactive. Thank you!"

"Really enjoyed Aaron's presentation. Looking forward to the upcoming programs. Keep up the great work!"



Yoga in the Park

Certified yoga instructor Lynn Minuskin kicked off another summer of Yoga in the Park, presented with the Arlington Heights Park District. This beginners yoga class was held in the scenic garden of the Historic Museum and attracted 40 enthusiastic yogis. The overwhelmingly positive response from the customers can be summed up by this quote from our survey results: *“Loved being outside. Great instructor.”* Yoga in the Park continues monthly, June through August, weather permitting.

Art 101: Answering the Call- the Artists of the Harlem Renaissance

Programs and Exhibits specialists Emily Muszynski and Natalie Brottman hosted art historian Jeff Mishur for another installment of the library’s Art 101 series. Twenty-eight participants listened as Jeff introduced them to painters and photographers of the Harlem Renaissance. Jeff’s presentation inspired many of the participants to learn more about the artists mentioned and the art displayed in local museums.

Needle felt a Narwhal!

Natasha Lehrer Lewis of Esther’s Place taught 27 participants how to needle felt an adorable narwhal - on Zoom! Programs and Exhibits Specialists Emily Muszynski and Natalie Brottman organized supply kits for registered customers to pick up before the program. With materials in hand, participants enjoyed learning a new craft. As one participant stated in their survey, *“Natasha was lovely. Always nice to be exposed to new makers.”* The library will be hosting another session of this same class in August.



Creative Aging: Art with Alayne Students Are Proud of Their First Portrait

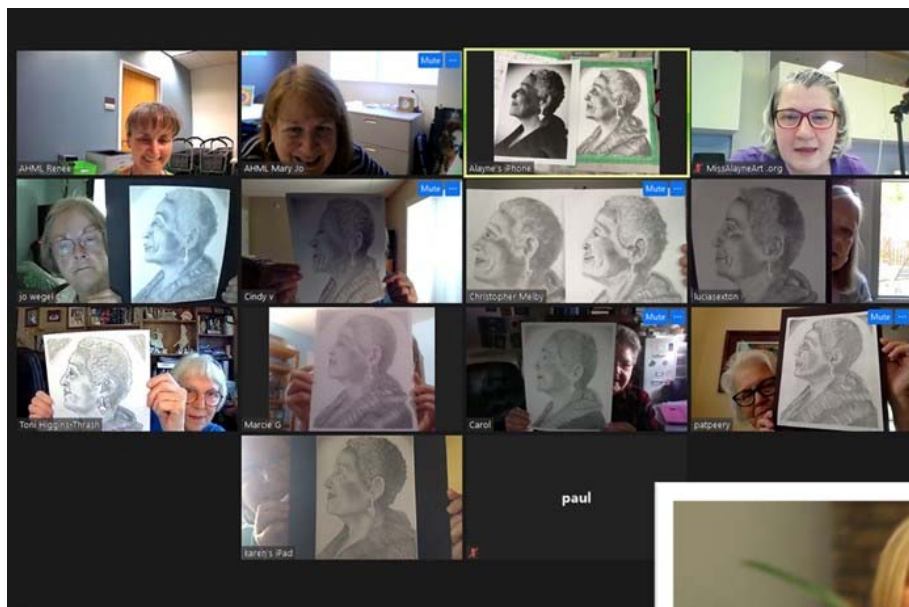
Art with Alayne students enjoy their class and meet-ups each month, but this month's portrait project came with an additional sense of accomplishment. Students shared how proud they felt of their work and how much the class means to them with SAS staff and in evaluation comments. Most never tried art before and some only joined the group in the past several months.

Some of the comments shared in student evaluations:

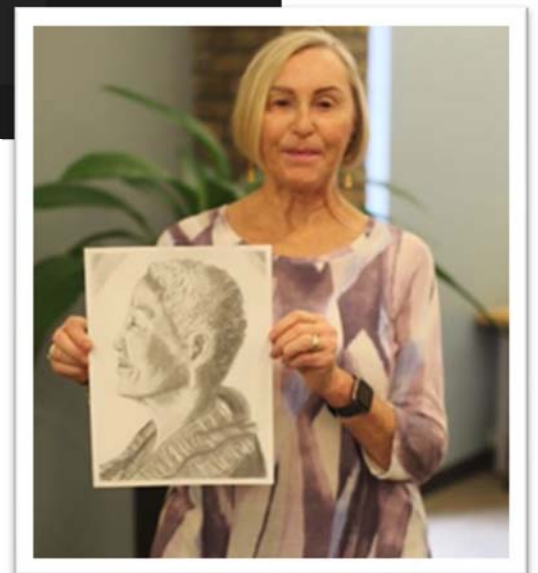
“It is a very rewarding experience to be able to produce such lovely works of art and see the beautiful and unique works of the other students.”

“This gave me a lot of confidence to try a portrait of my kids”

“I had not done any [art], for quite a while. But the Library, with Alayne and Mary Jo, have me doing somethings!!!! Thank you!”



One student brought her portrait into the library to show her work and express how much she has learned from the classes. She began attending in August 2020 and had no prior art experience.

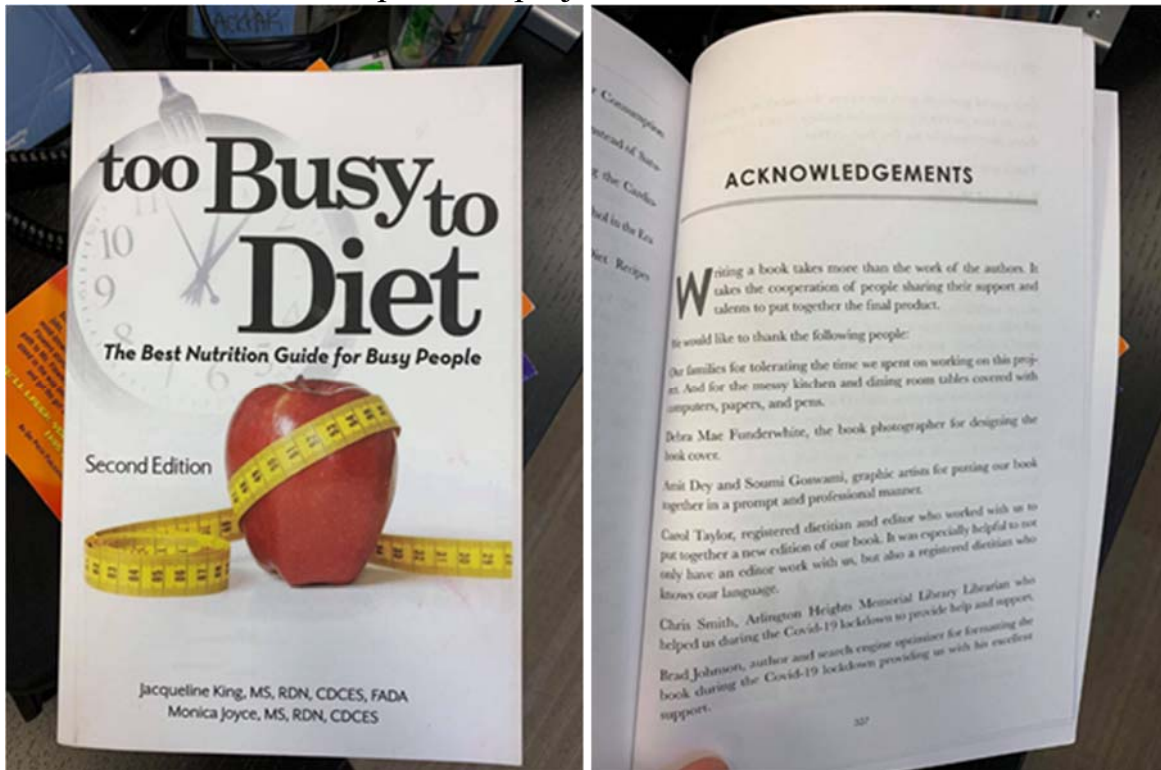


Community Blood Drive

Versiti returned to the Hendrickson Room June 30 for another successful blood drive. The Arlington Heights community, including staff donors, surpassed Versiti's goal of 30 with 31 whole blood donations, and three people donating double red cell for six units. With a total of 37 units donated, Arlington Heights potentially helped 111 patients! The next drive will be Thursday, December 2. A special thank you to Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer Begich and the Arlington Heights Memorial Library volunteers for showing up and assisting Versiti staff by taking temperatures and checking people in upon arrival.

Book Acknowledgement

Jacqueline King, the local author of *Too Busy to Diet: The Best Nutrition Guide for Busy People*, recognized Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith and the library in her book's acknowledgments: "*Chris Smith, Arlington Heights Memorial Library Librarian who helped us during the Covid-19 lockdown to provide help and support.*" Chris advised the author on formatting her manuscript and connected her with other resources to complete the project.



Vehicle Sticker Renewals Take Off

Circulation's Checkout Desk saw its busiest month yet for vehicle stickers, with 32 renewals issued in June. This service, which began in April of this year, has been steadily growing in popularity. The convenience and friendly, quick library service are draws for customers choosing to renew at the library versus other locations.

Pee Wee Artists

Youth Services staff were thrilled to welcome back the library's littlest customers for the first in-person program in the Hendrickson Room. On Thursday, June 10, Youth Services Assistant Manager Maria Papanastassiou and Early Literacy Supervisor Rebecca King welcomed a total of 58 customers to Pee Wee Artists, over the course of three sessions. Customers completed three different art projects, exploring colors and showcasing their creativity. One caregiver burst into tears of joy when seeing Ms. Rebecca for the first time since the pandemic began!



Tween T-shirt Embroidery

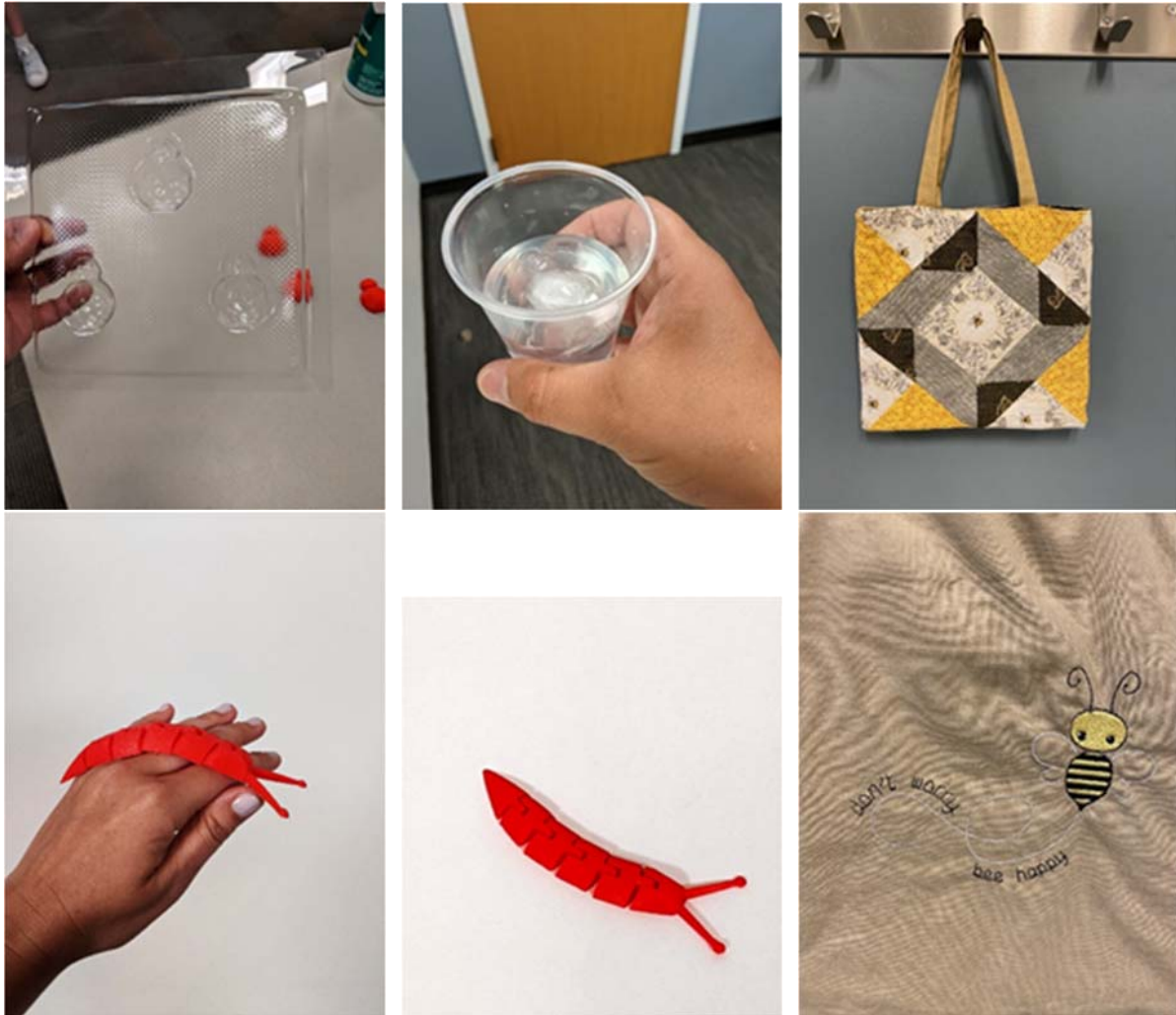


On Tuesday, June 15, seventeen customers attended this virtual program with a hands-on component. Tween Librarian Kerry Bailey used tutorials on CreativeBug to learn the basics of hand embroidery: how to thread a needle, use an embroidery hoop and how to do the backstitch. Tweens traced their chosen design onto an adhesive stabilizer and adhered it to their T-shirt. They applied an embroidery hoop, carefully

stitched the outline of their design and then removed the hoop and stabilizer to reveal their completed design. A few days after the program two of the tween participants proudly wore their embroidered T-shirts to the library!

Testing Makerplace Equipment

In preparation for the opening of the Makerplace, Makerplace staff began preparing and testing the equipment that will be available for public use in the space. They completed several projects on the embroidery machine, 3-D printers, vacuum former and other pieces.



Summer Volunteer Squad

This summer, the library was pleased to bring back Summer Volunteer Squads (SVS) after it was put on hold in 2020. Ninety-six Arlington Heights teens in grades 7-12 are volunteering weekly this summer to give back to the community. Each of the eight unique squads is led by a Youth Services staff member and some are co-led by staff from Digital Services and Community and Circulation Services. Witness the dedicated SVS teen volunteers in action at some of the library's upcoming programs including Storytime in the Park, Book Buddies and Choose Your Own Adventure Writing Club!

Arlington Heights Garden Club Unique Boutique and Garden Walk

The Arlington Heights Garden Club Unique Boutique and Garden Walk took place on Sunday, June 27, on the Arlington Heights Historical Society grounds. Circulation Assistant Mary Weber and Friends of the Library Volunteer Allison Anderson created a colorful and inviting booth with small plant giveaways and garden themed Friends of the Library (FOL) books for sale. The plants were a huge hit with customers, with 60 being given away in the first few hours! Nearly 100 FOL books were sold during this popular event.



Backstretch

The bookmobile started Backstretch in June. Busier than expected, 40-50 kids dropped by for materials and then set up shop at the craft table outside each week. Adults come too! A Little Free Library was installed at the track, bringing a shelf unit to the café with books and movies for adults and kids, generously donated by the Friends! This will give the residents there an opportunity to get materials outside of regular bookmobile visits.



Staffing News and Professional Development

ILA Committee Appointment

Info Services Manager Jolie Duncan was asked to serve on the ILA Conference Program Committee. This is a two-year appointment with a focus on planning the 2022 ILA conference.

ServSafe Manager Certification

In preparation for Makerplace Kitchen management, Culinary Advisor Brian Baseggio recertified his ServSafe Manager credentials through an 8-hour course and scored a 97% on the proctored test. This certification will ensure that the library meets all the high sanitation standards necessary to offer a shared kitchen and classroom environment.

Test Drive New *Have Dreams* Virtual Training

SAS Supervisor and ADA Coordinator Katie Myers coordinated a free staff training opportunity from our local community partner that serves the autism community, [*Have Dreams*](#). In return for providing feedback from library staff for their new virtual training module the library received training that included a comprehensive overview of autism characteristics and culture, quick tips to help set-up library spaces for success for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and demonstration videos on how to adapt books and games at different levels for someone with autism. Available staff in the Youth Services department and twelve staff from Senior and Accessible Services, Security, Digital Services and Info Services completed the training and provided survey feedback. The organization was grateful for the survey feedback and decided to make the training free to all libraries.

Rotary Involvement

In November of 2020, Mike Driskell, executive director, and Shannon Distel, deputy director, joined the Arlington Heights Rotary Club in a shared membership representing the library. In June, Mike was installed as a member of the Rotary board, and chair of the Community Services Committee. Shannon is also taking a leadership role and will be heading up a “Hamming it up” group.