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Executive Director's Report

September 2021

What's New @ AHML

Makerplace Grand Opening

The Makerplace grand opening event took place on September 19. After many months of planning and build out, the public debut went off without a hitch! The day consisted of a dedication ceremony with speeches from library executive director Mike Driskell, Library Board of Trustees President Greg Zyck and Mayor of Arlington Heights Tom Hayes followed by tours of the space.



Makerspace and Digital Services staff performed equipment demonstrations and 487 individuals took tours of the space. Nearly 400 waivers were signed to use the Makerplace equipment and kitchen and 29 people signed up for new library cards.



Makerplace Tours

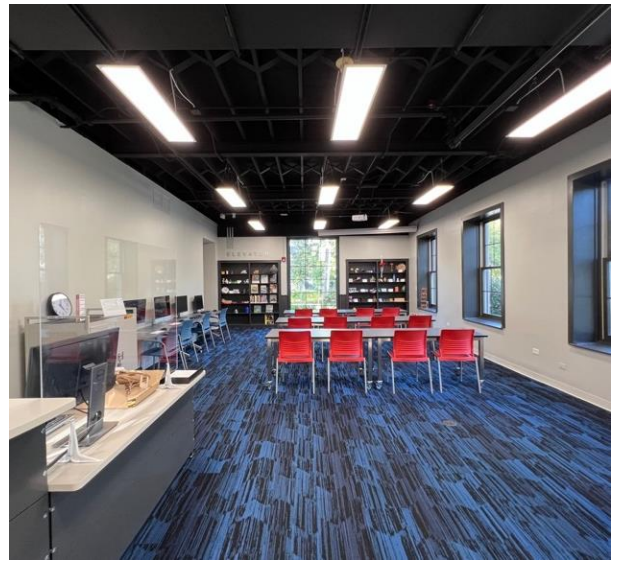
Two weeks of special preview tours of the completed space included tours for 100 library staff, the Illinois Questers/Godey Chapter and Friends of the Library. The Arlington Heights Memorial Library Foundation held a special evening event. Makerspace staff engraved wine glasses with the Epilog laser cutter as giveaways for the Foundation's celebration. On September 18, a two-hour Neighbors Open House preview had 56 neighbors come through for early tours. After the grand opening, 98 customers took tours offered during Makerplace operating hours in September.

At the beginning of September, with just seventeen days to go before opening, Makerspace staff finalized building setup. This would not have happened without the collaboration and hard work of the IT and Facilities teams.

BEFORE



AFTER



Makerplace Stories



A customer came in wanting to make a Michigan State pint glass. He started with no artwork and decided to engrave two graphics on the glass.



A group of teen boys stopped by to sew pillows. The pillows were not for a class, they just wanted to sew!



A customer who started out using the space for sewing, ventured into the arts space. Pictured is a drawing she made in 40 minutes with the Prisma colored pencil set.



Even though the Makerplace was not open all of September, it still set a library record for most customer 3D print jobs in one month with 42 completed jobs! Makerspace staff oversaw the printing of more jobs in one month than at the library in all of 2020.

ESL Programs

ESL & Literacy Services offered a new program in September called *ESL Improv*. This interactive in-person class uses fun techniques such as word play, games, making up stories and playing characters to help sharpen English language skills. Ten participants joined in several improvisation exercises. The library will offer this volunteer-led program once a month, going forward.



Digitize It! VHS, Tape Film and Reel to Reel

Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith began a new *Digitize It* series of programs to highlight individual digitization processes that are available from within the Studio. Chris goes in depth in the specialized equipment and software for specific formats with enough detail to replace a one-on-one appointment. On September 9, he taught *Digitize It: VHS and Tape Films* and went over digitizing VHS, Hi8, VHS-C and Mini DV tapes to a group of 11. On September 24, he taught *Digitize It: Reel to Reel Film* that covered 8mm, Super 8 and 16mm film reels to a group of seven. The series will continue in October with *Digitize It: Audio and Slides/Photos*.

Outreach and Community Engagement

Library Card Sign-Up Month

This month, 786 new residents signed up for library cards. This is a 274% increase over last September (210). This increase includes 523 library cards for children, 435 being first student library cards requested through our partnership with School District 25 during annual school registration. The District 25 registration took place in August in 2020.

D214 Wildstang Robotics

High School District 214 librarians Kim Miklusak and Christie Sylvester requested representation from local public libraries to present research resources to D214 Wildstang Robotics students. Teen Services Supervisor Alice Son partnered with Mount Prospect Public Library's Teen Librarian to highlight library resources at Buffalo Grove High School for 30 juniors and seniors looking for engineering solutions.



One Book, One Village About Town

In addition to One Book, One Village programs and book discussions, staff participated in outreach sessions with the bookmobile at the local Farmers Market. In two sessions, staff interacted with 134 community members.



High School Outreach

Youth Services staff returned to local high schools for in-person outreach visits. The library re-launched monthly Tinker Days, where students visit Youth Services staff in the school library during lunch periods. In September, Hub staff engaged with 150 students at Buffalo Grove and Rolling Meadows High Schools. Teens participated in a variety of activities as they created their own custom buttons, played games and crafted mask lanyards as planned and coordinated by Youth Outreach Specialist Ellie Richardson.



Serving Our Community

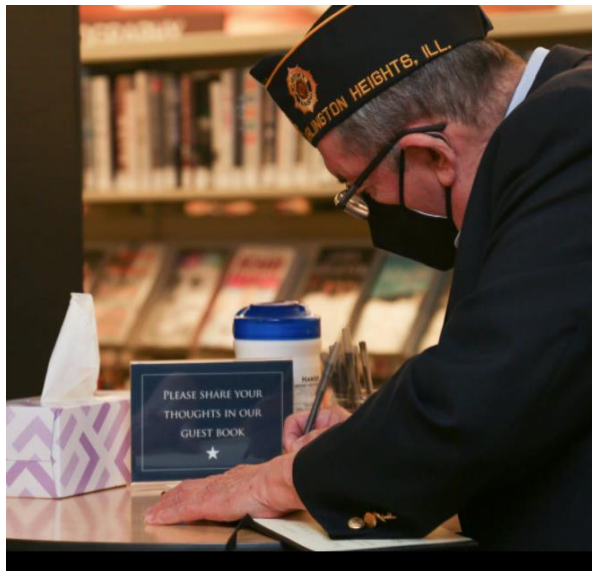
Portrait of a Soldier Partnership and Exhibit

On the 20th anniversary of September 11, the library partnered to bring two important remembrances to the Arlington Heights community and to Illinois Gold Star families: a September 11 Remembrance Ceremony and the *Portrait of a Soldier* Exhibit.

Portrait of a Soldier features over 300 hand-drawn graphite portraits of Illinois service members who



made the ultimate sacrifice overseas. Presented in partnership with local SALUTE, Inc., Arlington Heights Veterans Commission and more, the exhibit soft opened on Thursday, September 9. Media across the state visited to be the first to see the exhibit, its founder, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, local Gold Star family members and project partners.



Saturday, September 11 events began with a moving remembrance ceremony at the First Presbyterian Church. Approximately 200 attended the service, which included a reading of the names of Illinois' fallen heroes represented in the exhibit by Greg Padovani, Chairman of the Veterans Memorial Committee of Arlington Heights and Will Beiersdorf of Salute, Inc. Live American Sign Language interpretation extended the inclusivity of this special event. Guests then walked to the library where library leadership,

Programs and Exhibits staff, Communications and Marketing Specialist William Tolan and library partners welcomed guests. Governor Pat Quinn returned for the day's events, as well as Kiana and Donald Jeremiah, two of the exhibit's artists. Many of the fourteen Gold Star Families in attendance were seeing the exhibit for

the first time. The exhibit was viewed by over 400 people between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. on opening day.



An estimated 3,201 community members and visitors engaged with the exhibit from September 9-30. Due to community interest and heavy press coverage, the exhibit was extended an additional 5 days. During the exhibit period, visitors were invited to write letters to the troops. Eighty

community members, including a group of St. Viator students, wrote letters which will be delivered via Operation Gratitude.

September 15, 2021

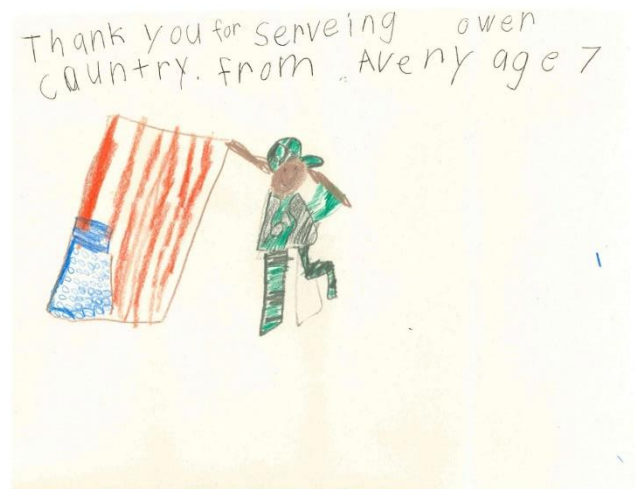
Dear Recruit Graduate,

Thank you for your service.
Your parents must ^{be} very proud of you.

My daughter went to bootcamp at Great Lakes Naval Station a year ago. She didn't think could do it, BUT, she did graduate & felt so proud. She loves serving in the Navy. She has two friends from high school who also enlisted. All three of them chose very different jobs in the Navy.

These are the things to remember: Just be yourself, Take it one day a time, And.... if I may say so.... write your mother once a week!

D.G.U.T.S. (Don't give up the ship)
Once again,
Thank you
and best wishes.
signed,
Someone from Illinois





Portrait of a Soldier Artist Panel

Programs and Exhibits staff facilitated a conversation between the artists of the *Portrait of a Soldier* exhibit and community partners. The panel marked the first time all three exhibit artists met - Cameron Schilling began the portraits in 2004 and father/daughter artists Kiana and Donald Jeremiah completed the most recent portraits, added to the exhibit just this year. Together, their body of work honors more than 300 fallen heroes who are presented chronologically, by their date of death. The artists shared emotional and touching stories about working with Illinois Gold Star Families. Jim Miks, Hersey High School English Teacher and recipient of the 2019-2020 Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award, was also on the panel and said the exhibit inspired the art department at Hersey High School to paint a portrait for the Road Home program at Rush Hospital. One couple watching the panel live were Gold Star parents who chatted with Cameron about the portrait he made of their son. One attendee shared: “The AHML continues to bring outstanding events to the community. I recently moved from AH to Elburn, IL. I am grateful to be able to stay in touch virtually.”

[The recording of the panel is available on our YouTube channel](#), where it has been viewed 44 times at the time of reporting.

One Book, One Village in full swing!

Our 8th annual One Book, One Village (OBOV) celebrates Robin Wall Kimmerer and *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*. The annual community read initiative kicked off in late August with programs and discussions picking up in September.

One Book, One Village Youth Programming

To connect young customers with the communitywide OBOV experience, Youth Services staff presented two programs to support themes in this year's book. Tween Librarian Kerry Bailey and Lead Youth Services Advisor Amy Belford, in collaboration with Trickster Cultural Center, held a book discussion of *Ancestor Approved: Intertribal Stories for Kids*, a collection of short stories describing an intertribal powwow. Representatives from Trickster Cultural Center shared tribal regalia and demonstrated traditional dance. Youth Programs Specialist Maureen Vela coordinated a visit with Wild Edible Foods Instructor Natalie Evans to present One Plant at a Time: The Mighty Oak Tree. Families learned about the life cycle of the oak tree, its importance to the environment and indigenous peoples, played games and created drawings from sample acorns and oak leaves.

Trickster Cultural Center is partnering with the library to provide programming for every age group for this year's OBOV.



OBOV Book Discussion

OBOV book discussions began in September with Info Services Advisor Joan Lasky hosting a discussion at the Arlington Heights Historical Museum. Several attendees said that it inspired them in their daily lives, and one woman was inspired to prepare her yard for a three sisters vegetable garden! Appreciation was expressed for the diversity the book brings to the library's offerings.

No One Sees Indians: Native Americans in the Media

Moderated by Programs and Exhibits Supervisor Megan Young, a virtual audience of 22 had the chance to learn from Arapaho filmmaker and [Illinois Humanities Road Scholar](#) Ernest M. Whiteman III. Ernest illustrated "Vanishing and Violence", the two "V"'s often attributed to how Native Americans are represented in the media and inform audiences' perceptions of Native people and issues. Whiteman encouraged participation and reflection with questions such as: "What are some Native American stereotypes?" and "Why don't we say 'Indian'?" A list of films Whiteman discussed were shared with attendees following the live event.

Produce Swap



Programs and Exhibits Specialists Natalie Brottman and Emily Muszynski celebrated *Braiding Sweetgrass* and locally sourced food with a produce swap outside the Makerplace. During the two-hour drop in event, 23 people stopped by to share and receive fresh produce and chat about their gardens. Customers dropped off surplus from their gardens,

including cucumbers, basil, squash and cherry tomatoes. Customers walking by were pleasantly surprised by the opportunity to enjoy free, locally grown foods. Produce swaps promote sustainability and community building, and the Makerplace is the perfect location to continue the concept next year.

Wider Lens – A Curated Selection

Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker curated a Wider Lens miniseries and led discussion around three companion films which introduce Indigenous culture and expound on themes in Robin Wall Kimmerer’s *Braiding Sweetgrass*. All selected films are available on Kanopy with a library card and were shown in person.

Seven attendees joined a screening of *Gather*, the first in the series, in the Hendrickson Room and participated in a discussion with Neal. The majority in attendance were reading *Braiding Sweetgrass* and appreciated the film’s connection to its themes - reclaiming identity, reconnecting with the environment and issues of food sovereignty.

It’s Magic!

Youth Services Advisors Sara Prince and Dana Mijalski welcomed 15 young customers to an interactive STEM program, where eight unique science-based magic tricks were performed. The second and third graders walked through stations featuring each trick and were able to discuss the science behind the magic. A curated collection of books and a list of resources was provided. Registrants were given a goodie bag of materials to practice and perform the tricks on their own at home!



September LitCrates

Thirty-one LitCrate boxes were picked up in September. The boxes included a book selection and Fall-themed goodies: An apple red candle, a mini apple pie and a bookmark with a recipe for "apple pie in a jar". Ten customers sent feedback emails reporting they loved the service! Customer feedback included:



"I have enjoyed LitCrate and eagerly anticipate the reading selection for each new month".

"Yes! Yes! Yes! I love your Lit Crate service. Both books were perfect for me and I enjoyed both of them. It's fun to open the box and find what book is in there. Neither one had been on my to read list."

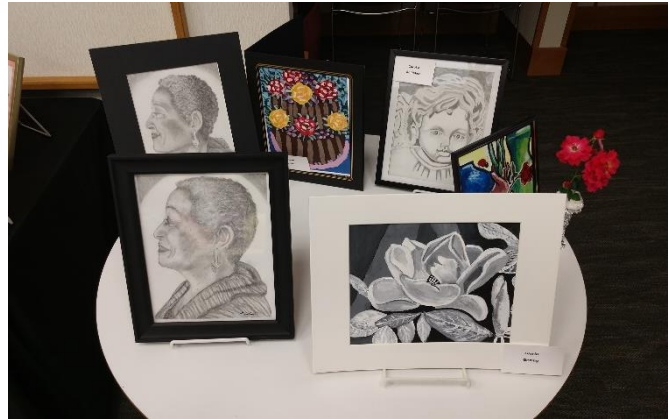
St. Peter Partnership

Following the signed intergovernmental agreement for educator library cards, the middle grade English and Language Arts teachers filled out a resource bag request asking for titles to support an upcoming genre study on realistic fiction. After selecting and gathering over 70 books to send to the school, Youth Outreach Librarian Emily Koch volunteered to deliver booktalks and presented to 80 students from four 6-8th grade classes, promoting book options and other library services.

Starting Your Own Food Business

Info Services Librarian Lev Kalmens hosted *Starting Your Own Food Business*, a nice tie-in with the Makerplace's commercial kitchen. Customers learned about local food industry regulations, working in a commercial kitchen, pricing products and building a brand. They explored options for structuring a new business venture as well as information about leasing commercial property.

Creative Aging Artist's Celebration



Art with Alayne participants displayed their favorite projects when they connected in person with art instructor Alayne and fellow students at the library's first artists' celebration.

Students enjoyed having a chance to see everybody in person and view completed pieces. Comments included:

"Culminating activity and celebration to get together and see favorite pieces of artwork that we have created because of Alayne's excellent instructions."

"It was great seeing the other artists and their work to see the true colors and texture."

"This was a way to meet all my art students in person after doing it on zoom."

College Knowledge: How to Pay for College Without Going Broke

Twenty-five caregivers logged in to navigate the oftentimes complex financial world of paying for college. My College Planning Team moderated their own questions through chat. Planning, preparing and paying for students to attend college can be daunting, so the library provides a great service to the community by offering programs such as these.

Art 101: Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera

Art Historian Jeff Mishur returned on September 22 to present a virtual lecture on one of the art world's most intriguing couples: Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. Seventy-six customers joined Jeff on Zoom for the fourth installment of the Art 101 series. A significant number of attendees had recently visited the Frida Kahlo 'Timeless' exhibit on display at College of DuPage's Cleve Carney Museum. The series continues in November and December with *Gathered Around a Table* and ends in December with Andy Warhol's Pop Art.

Professional Development

Path to Career Readiness at Impact Live Virtual Conference

Info Services Supervisor Elizabeth Ludemann and Digital Services Librarian Bill Pardue presented at the virtual Gale Cengage Impact Live Conference. Elizabeth and Bill presented "Gamifying the Job Search: The Path to Career Readiness," highlighting [the online tool they developed](#) which is a self-directed set of online and in-library activities designed to help new and returning job seekers develop effective resumes/cover letters, interview skills and workplace competencies.