

Executive Director's Report November 2021

What's New @ AHML

Accessibility Support Collection Launches

On Tuesday, October 26, the library debuted the new Accessibility Support Collection after many years of planning and development in a collaboration between Youth Services and Collection Services Group. The collection was made possible by a generous donation from [C.I.T.Y. of Support-Children In Therapy and You](#). Executive Director Mike Driskell welcomed a group of community supporters, staff and board members from both the library and C.I.T.Y. of Support to launch the collection, followed by remarks from Beth Deiter from C.I.T.Y. of Support and Youth Services Assistant Manager Maria Papanastassiou; long-term community partners. The partnership's newest resource features over 350 items, including books for kids and adults; toys designed to support motor, social, cognitive, visual and auditory skill development; therapeutic and adaptive technology tools and more. The collection provides an opportunity for families and therapists to try out specialized items before purchasing them, while also accessing support and specialized resources and information. Just 3 days after the introduction of the collection, 13% of the newly developed collection was checked out.

Following the collection launch, 52 customers enjoyed engaging music with Prospect Music Therapy, adapted movement with Hop Along Yogi, and a sensory storytime and play with Youth Services Supervisor Rebecca King and Youth Programs Specialist Becky Clesen at Our Time: Children in Therapy and You Celebration.



Did You Know?



There are new hangtags in the adult nonfiction collection, with a new feature called "Did you know?" These hangtags have QR codes that, when scanned, take the user to one of our databases. For example, the QR code on the hangtag in the 740s (crafting) leads to Creativebug, a source for thousands of on-demand art and craft classes. The hangtag in 629 (car repair) leads to the Technology and Auto Repair databases page on our website. The hangtags may also identify other locations for related

topics, such as the hangtag in 977 (north central United States) letting people know about the local history collection in the Shackley Room, or the one in the 780s (music) telling customers where musical scores are located.

Diversity and Inclusion

Inclusion Awareness Month

The library shared its commitment to inclusion through a series of programs and outreach during Inclusion Awareness Month. Each targeted program was a great opportunity to learn more about customers' unique needs. Throughout the month, staff interacted with customers with disabilities, parents, caretakers, educators, and new partners, all enthusiastic to spread the word about the library's inclusive approach.

Accessibility Resource Hours

The library offered a combination of in-person and Zoom-based resource hours throughout the month and provided residents the opportunity to connect with a variety of organizations such as Have Dreams, RTA Mobility Management and Illinois Telecommunications Access Corporation that provide support and services to persons with disabilities.



Diversity Audit

Collection Services recently completed a diversity audit to assess the diversity of the collection and help discover missing titles and underrepresented voices.

In summary:

- 140,254 titles were sent from the library's circulating regular print English collection, for adult, teen and kids.
- 115,846 of the titles submitted matched titles in the database.
- 13,359 (or 12%) were considered inclusive. Kids and teens materials rated higher than the public library average, while adult materials ranked slightly lower. Overall, AHML was on par with the public library average of 12%.

Collection librarians evaluated the selection lists provided through the diversity audit. In total, 330 new diverse titles were added to the collection.

- 46 children
- 13 teens
- 78 adult fiction
- 21 adult graphic novels
- 172 adult nonfiction

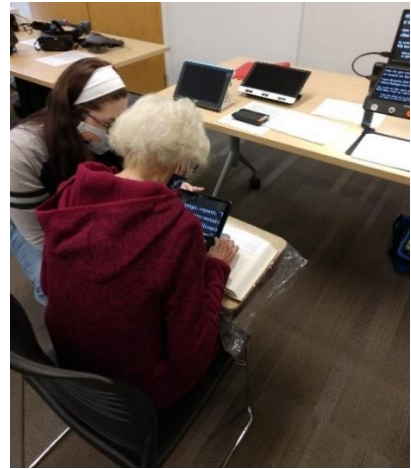
Fairytale Fling

To kick off the 4th annual Inclusion Awareness Month, the library partnered with Northwest Special Recreation Association to host the Fairytale Fling, featuring a DJ and dancing, games and a photobooth. Twenty-eight adults with disabilities attended the event, where they danced, enjoyed fairytale-themed games and crafts, voted in a "Best Dressed" contest and took home a photobooth keepsake.



Chicago Lighthouse Low Vision Road Show

Ninety people attended the Low Vision Products Road Show during the open house all-day event. The Chicago Lighthouse is a not-for-profit agency committed to providing the highest quality educational, clinical, vocational and rehabilitation services for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. Staff from the organization connected attendees to a variety of products, including CCTV magnifiers, portable reading devices, independent living aids, accessibility software and much more.



Senior and Accessibility Services (SAS) staff were able to connect attendees to library services and materials, including the large print collection, the Illinois State Library Talking Book service, community resource information and library delivery services.

Staff from the Chicago Lighthouse were impressed by the attendance, saying, “this was the highest attendance we have ever had at a Road Show” and would love to partner with the library to host another event in 2022.

Calvin Can't Fly: The Story of Bookworm Birdie

On Saturday, October 9, Youth Services hosted a presentation of the book *Calvin Can't Fly: The Story of Bookworm Birdie* in American Sign Language. This short, animated story shared Calvin's love for the library and learning as well as a lesson about working together when things feel challenging. Participants were treated to an opportunity after the story to learn some signs, as well as how to exaggerate those signs (emotion, big body language).



Serving Our Community

One Book One Village - An Evening with Robin Wall Kimmerer



On Thursday, October 21, the OBOV team and Programs & Exhibits staff collaborated to present the 8th annual One Book, One Village author event – An Evening with Robin Wall Kimmerer. A huge thank you to the community for making this the **highest attended OBOV author event to date with 626 in attendance!** Additionally, interest in the author event continues after its live run, with the [Youtube video](#) being viewed over 500 times.

Dr. Kimmerer was joined in conversation with WBEZ’s Jerome McDonnell, which sprouted a thoughtful and insightful discussion about the captivating themes in *Braiding Sweetgrass* - the world around us, Native Americans and Indigenous issues, and writing in general.



New this year, customers had the option of logging in from their homes or coming to the library to view the live event together in the Hendrickson Room. Thanks to Info Advisors Joan Lasky and Alisa Stanfield for welcoming 30 in-person attendees to the latter.

An incredible 267 survey responses indicate that a majority of attendees were appreciative of the book selection, and thoroughly enjoyed the discussion between Robin and Jerome. From the post-event survey, 75% of attendees indicated this was their first OBOV author event. In addition, 75% also indicated that they read the book prior to the event with an additional 21% planning to read the book in the future!

“The depth of the conversation between two brilliant, soulful people. Jerome McDonnell is fabulous as an interviewer and Robin Wall Kimmerer’s soul, depth and knowledge and wisdom shown through. She exuded kindness and care.”

Connecting with Nature and Indigenous Wisdom through One Book, One Village

On Sunday, October 3, Natalie Evans, a certified instructor on edible wild plants, presented from her home kitchen about Ethical Foraging and Preparation to a live audience of 25 customers on Zoom, with more than 50 post-event views on YouTube since the live event. Natalie explained the basics of ethical foraging and how to use and prepare local foraged plants, noting where it is legal and recommended to forage in the Chicago area. She incorporated Robin Wall Kimmerer's principles of the Honorable Harvest from *Braiding Sweetgrass* as well as recommending a host of other books and resources on the topic.



Forest Bathing

On October 9, Programs & Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski and Info Services Supervisor Elizabeth Ludemann took OBOV offsite for an afternoon of guided forest bathing. Guide Marie Zubinski led a group of sixteen adults on a meditative hike through Busse Woods. As they walked, Marie shared prompts to guide this thoughtful and contemplative walk. Marie ended the event with a fitting reading from the Thanksgiving section of *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Participants loved becoming one with nature and requested more forest bathing and outdoor programs.

Native American Storytelling

On October 15, Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker welcomed Gina Roxas from Trickster Cultural Center to the Hendrickson Room for a special Friday night OBOV event. Thirty attendees across ages joined to focus on the importance of storytelling in Indigenous culture. Gina brought braids of sweetgrass and incorporated Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*, in addition to traditional stories, throughout her prepared presentation. She gave attendees a glimpse into four generations of her family and her home on the Reservation in Mayetta, Kansas. The audience enjoyed the lively Q&A with Gina, who was very open and mindful with her answers.

Fry Bread Cooking Demonstration and More



On Saturday, October 23, an audience of 16 joined Native American Chef Jessica Pamonicutt from Trickster Cultural Center as she demonstrated how to make traditional fry bread. First, Chef Jessica read the book *Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story* and talked about its history and significance. As Chef Jessica kneaded the dough, the kids were each given a ball of play dough to roll and knead along with her. After the demonstration, both Chef Jessica and Gina Roxas from Trickster Cultural Center talked about native foods and what makes up a native plate.

Making Garden Teas with Indigenous Wisdom

Thursday, October 7 marked the first in-person programs in the Makerplace kitchen!



As part of One Book, One Village (OBOV), Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker worked with anthropologist and former Native American Cultures director Marcy Lautanan-Raleigh to create a hands-on tea class inspired by *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Marcy welcomed a total of twenty attendees over two sessions, offered back-to-back, each “indoor dining style,” with attendees masked unless consuming food or drink. She began the class with a gratitude reading from the book. Everyone enjoyed a small cup of herbal tea Marcy brewed and she discussed the flavor profiles and medicinal properties of various herbs which were passed around. Near the end of both programs, Marcy invited the attendees to choose which herbs they would like to try in a tea, and she brewed a concoction based on their recommendations.

Halloween Fun

Halloween Fun was held over a two-day period on Wednesday evening, October 27 and Thursday morning, October 28. The carnival-like event was filled with games, crafts and activities throughout Kids' World and engaged 288 customers over six sessions.



Earth Celebration and Pet Blessing

Bookmobile Driver Teri Scallon, Circulation Assistant Supervisor Megan Maier and Youth Services Librarian Emily Koch attended St. Simon's Earth Celebration and Pet Blessing, bringing materials focusing on gratitude for the animals with which we share our lives and for the Earth that cares for us.



Sew a Pumpkin Stuffy

Tween Librarian Kerry Bailey led 17 tween participants as they practiced threading a needle and making a gathered running stitch to make scented stuffed pumpkins on Wednesday, October 13. Everyone, regardless of skill level or previous sewing experience, successfully made an adorable pumpkin to bring home.



Farmer's Market

The annual Farmer's Market season ended with a final bookmobile visit on October 16. With 87 visitors, staff created four new library cards and checked out a wide variety of items, including many copies of *Braiding Sweetgrass*.

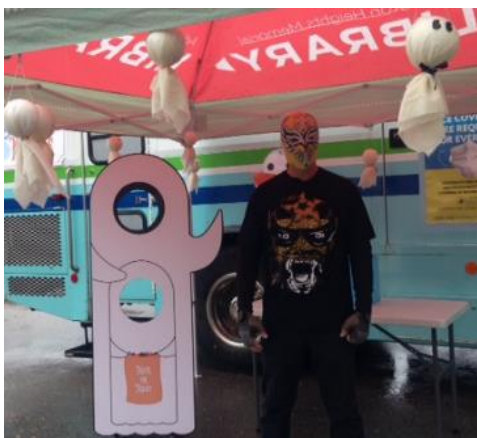


College Knowledge: FAFSA Completion Workshop

Teen Services added an in-person FAFSA Completion Workshop to the College Knowledge programming series that helps prepare students and caregivers for college planning. On October 27, 15 caregivers and students came to receive FAFSA fill-out support from knowledgeable representatives of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). Customers could bring their own devices or one of the library's laptops to sit down and dedicate two hours to complete the lengthy form. Many customers had questions as they filled out the FAFSA, and some customers attended specifically to ask questions about completing this document due to big life changes whether financial or because of deaths in their families. The presenters from ISAC were also bilingual, which was especially helpful for one family where caregivers were more comfortable asking questions in Spanish while their teen conversed with the presenter in English. As they left the program, attendees shared that they were able to complete or nearly complete their FAFSAs and thanked staff for connecting them with ISAC.

Trunk N Treat

Even with the colder weather, over 150 people stopped by the spooky Boo-mobile at the annual Trunk N Treat event. During the first sensory-friendly hour, Bookmobile Drivers Ron Moravec and Teri Scallon saw quite a few people who were excited to receive a fun beach ball during their visit. Throughout the day many customers snapped photos in the ghost-themed photo-op created by the library's talented Graphics team.



Halloween Block Party

On Saturday, October 30, Circulation Assistant Mary Weber and Bookmobile Driver Teri Scallon attended a Halloween block party requested by local residents. About 20 people explored the bookmobile and participated in a holiday wreath craft.

Makerplace Programs Kick Off

After offering daily tours in September, programs officially kicked off in October at the Makerplace. Makerspace Specialists Stacy Craft and Kate Henry led customers through a series of “Makerplace Essentials” beginner programs. The Series covers the basics of 3D printing, laser cutting, sewing and vinyl cutting. Overall, 15 programs were offered at the Makerplace with 143 attendees.



Makerplace Essentials: Sewing



Makerplace Essentials: Laser Cutting (With attendee-designed coasters)

Makerplace Stories



With the laser cutter, one young man cut a wood cross guard for a sword from the video game *Demon Slayer* for his Halloween custom. He made it with wood he purchased from the Makerplace.

One young customer manufactured nearly her entire Halloween costume using various Makerplace equipment. She went as Lady Loki from the hit Marvel Studios tv series *Loki*. She fabricated her cloak and chest piece in the sewing space and 3D printed Loki's infamous horn headdress.



Over the course of two days, a young customer came in to learn how to sew and create a homemade Spider-Man Miles Morales mask for Halloween. This was his first time sewing, but he tackled threading the machine, sewing around curves and a zipper with the help of Makerspace Specialist Kate Henry.

A college student laser cut and etched their architectural model for their Mobile Home Design, an architecture class project.



District 214 Tours the Makerplace

Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager Chris Krueger worked with Library Delivery and Accessibility Supervisor Katie Myers, Youth Services Supervisor Alice Son and Patryk Matuszewski from District 214 to coordinate four tours for their Special Education department. In total, the Makerplace staff gave tours to 77 teachers and students.

Area Groups Tour the Makerplace

Makerplace staff gave tours to numerous groups in October including Gail Borden Public Library District, Ela Area Public Library, Helen Plum Library, Barrington Area Library, District 25, District 214 and Arlington Heights Park District staff. In all the Makerplace staff gave tours to 142 visitors in addition to its regularly scheduled public Makerplace tours.

Make Do and Mend

On October 23, Makerplace Specialist Kate Henry and Programs & Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski welcomed 13 community members to the Makerplace to “Make Do and Mend” as part of OBOV. Attendees dropped in during a two-hour window to work on the projects of their choice with library staff and volunteers. They were happy for a chance to hem pants and patch holes with the help of excellent sewing volunteers. This was the first Makerplace program hosted with volunteers and one these attendees would like to see offered more regularly.

Significant EBSCO Cost Savings

Digital Services Librarian Bill Pardue learned that through RAILS, the library is eligible for group rate discounts for certain EBSCO and Gale electronic resources and databases. While Gale is the library’s biggest and EBSCO its second biggest vendor, the most significant savings will be found with EBSCO. Upon renewal in April 2022, the library will save over \$14,000 with these discounts through EBSCO. Gale savings will be close to \$900, but because of certain package deals, the library will have access to more and higher tier products!