

## Executive Director's Report

January 2022

### What's New @ AHML

#### **Bike Rack, Tire Pump and Repair Station Installation**

Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager Chris Krueger worked with the Facilities department to select a location for the installation of the new bike racks, tire pump and bike repair station. Fitting these in an area that previously only housed bike racks was made possible by the removal of a large bush on the north side of the Makerplace entrance. (One of the landscapers who came to remove the bush in front of the building ended up sharpening his chainsaw in the Makerplace!) Once weather permits, customers will have a safe place to store their bicycles, both alleviating Makerplace parking and saving the environment. Funding for the bike rack, pump and repair station was generously provided by our Friends of the Library. Thank you, Friends!



#### **While You Wait**

The While You Wait feature is a new feature in our online catalog released in December. When a title is not available for checkout, a button will appear. When it is clicked, five similar titles owned by the library and available for checkout will be listed. This feature is available for print books in regular print and large print, and audiobooks, for all ages.

## Serving Our Community

### **Senior Phone Story Discussion**

The weekly senior phone story discussion continues to be a huge success, and on December 28 met for the 90<sup>th</sup> consecutive week. As pandemic mitigations continue to limit in-person gatherings in some senior living communities, staff have active participation and regular attendees who continue to look forward to this weekly “fun” and “entertaining” event with their friends. Senior and Accessibility Services staff recently received permission from Hachette Audio and Highbridge Audio to use their audio materials for the program, expanding the ability to find new and engaging materials for the audience of this unique program.

### **Fiesta del Año - Gala event for the Northwest Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

Info Services librarian Brittany Coleman and Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin attended the end of the year Gala event for the Northwest Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on December 16. Brittany and Catalina networked with other members of the chamber including Harper College, Bright Futures Chiropractic in Arlington Heights, Tia Juarez who has been a presenter for some of the library’s programs, NBC Telemundo Reporter Sandra Torres and many others. Brittany and Catalina shared information about library services and future collaboration opportunities.

The Arlington Heights Memorial Library was the first library in the northwest suburbs to join the chamber as members in 2019 and now the library is one of three involved libraries in the area. The library continues supporting the chamber’s mission and efforts, as it plans to collaborate in different bilingual business programming and outreach opportunities in 2022.





## Business Builders Outreach



Business Advisor Diane Malik hosted a Chamber of Commerce Business Builders Group for an outreach event at the Makerplace. Makerspace Specialist Kate Henry explained the equipment and materials offered at the Makerplace and provided a hands-on demonstration. Kate used the large Cricut vinyl cutter to make a sign with store hours on it. This helped make a direct connection for how the space offers real value for small businesses.

## Author Andrea Wang



Youth Services Librarian Emily Koch coordinated school visits and programming with award-winning author Andrea Wang from December 6–9. Andrea virtually visited 11 public elementary schools over the course of four days. Almost 2,300 students logged onto Zoom with their classrooms to hear Andrea talk about her book, *Magic Ramen*, a nominee on this year’s Monarch Award nominee list, which participating schools vote on in the new year. Andrea discussed her journey to become an author, talked about the life of Momofuku Ando and read her picture book about him.



## Teen Finals Study Lounge Returns

As District 214 high schoolers geared up for final exams this December, the library was happy to welcome back 754 teen studiers for *Finals Study Lounge* after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. From December 11–16, Teen Services ensured there were extra study tables throughout the library to accommodate the influx of teens. The second-floor conference rooms were also a popular destination for teens, with 330, or 44%, of teens using the rooms for studying with their friends. To curb the stress and anxiety experienced by teens during this time, Hub staff wheeled around a snack trolley, offered a meditation and stress relief program with a yoga instructor, provided a mood jar sensory DIY kit and had plenty of post-its and index cards available for teens to use.



## Pop-Up Events Reach All-ages



On December 4, more than 75 customers dropped into *Pop-Up: Make a Button Pack*. This pop-up was an incredible success and engaged families with younger children, teens and older adults. Everybody who tried it loved the process of button making, from choosing materials to pressing buttons and magnets using the library’s button machines. Attendees enjoyed the variety of fabric, magazines, colored pencils and markers, and small bags and ribbons to “wrap” the pins as holiday presents. Many left excited to check out a button machine from the Library of Things or visit Makerplace to use the machine there.

During the week of December 13, Programs & Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski and Youth Services Librarian Emily Koch hosted three *Snoopy Comic Pop-ups* events located alongside the *Snoopy and the Red Baron* exhibit. One hundred and eighty-eight customers and *Peanuts*-lovers of all ages stopped by for hands-on Snoopy- activities from origami doghouses and drawing tutorials to an exhibit scavenger hunt created by the Teen Advisory Board. On Saturday, December 18, Eisner award-winner comic artist and illustrator Art Baltazar joined the pop-up with drawing advice and free copies of his comic books. Families were happy to happen upon fun pop-up activities designed for all-ages at the library again. One parent shared that she hadn't seen her kids this excited in a very long time.



## The Makerplace's First Holiday Season

Each day of the week leading up to Christmas had 12-15 customers standing outside of the Makerplace before opening. At times laser cutters saw a staggering 5-hour wait. In the 30-hours the space was open from December 21-23, the lasers were checked out a total of 49 times. All areas of the Makerplace were used and many tables in Flex Space 1 were occupied at once.



Makerplace staff met each customer at their skill-level and guided them to the best solutions for their projects, all while juggling equipment availability, material compatibility and customer knowledge. Customers used the Epilog and the Dremel laser engravers to create custom cups and tumblers, cutting boards, laptop cases and more. Examples include a poem etched into walnut and cut to fit in a frame for the perfect gift.



## DIY Gift Wrapping

On December 7 and 11, Makerspace specialists hosted *DIY Gift Wrap* which was the first class in the creative arts space. Participants painted their own wrapping paper, learned how to make pom-poms and constructed and decorated custom gift boxes. Two sessions of the program were offered for a total of 21 participants who left with personalized wrapping supplies.



## Design It/Make It: Holiday Ornaments

On December 8 and 15, Makerspace Advisor Lee Anne Davis and Technology Instruction Coordinator David Olichwier hosted a program series that took place across the main library and the Makerplace. The first *Design It* portion was taught in the training center, teaching the 12 attendees the basics of Adobe Illustrator by designing a holiday ornament. The second *Make It* portion had those same attendees learning how to cut their designs out on the Makerplace's laser cutters.

## Makerplace Stories

A couple examples of the types of activities people used the Makerplace for in December:



A customer completed his first quilt made from baby clothes in the sewing room after never having used a sewing machine before starting the project.





A customer who works at the forest preserve used a laser engraver to etch designs into log puck pieces from downed trees.

### **In the Kitchen**

During December, customers were invited to a variety of events in the Makerplace kitchen, from *Natural Dyeing* to a drop-in *Holiday Cookie Exchange*. Registration continues to be limited to Arlington Heights cardholders to meet the demand for hands-on culinary classes. 109 people attended the seven events offered this month.

### **Holiday Cookie Exchange**

On Sunday, December 19, bakers were invited to drop off a home-baked cookie of their choice to the Makerplace kitchen for a community cookie exchange. Each of the 14 bakers were invited to pack a box, choosing from the variety of cookies. Community members who did not bake were each invited to try half a dozen cookies of their choosing. In all, 24 people enjoyed the event and both bakers and drop-in tasters were thankful for the event.



## **Chef Grace returns with Charcuterie and Brunch**

Chef Grace of Arlington Heights' Scratchboard returned to the Makerplace kitchen to lead two new classes with two sessions each. Grace has led eight classes with the library and customers love her friendly and detailed instruction.

In December, she taught 32 residents tips and tricks to create *Charcuterie & Cheese Boards* to impress their guests (offered in two sessions). Chef Grace shared background of the meats and cheeses she selected, including information about the farms and purveyors she favors and why.



She led another 31 residents through brunch recipes. Also divided into two sessions, *Brunch* attendees got their hands on preparation from seeding a pomegranate to mixing dressings, building a colorful citrus salad and making top-tier, flavored oatmeal. Everybody left with food, recipes and the confidence to successfully create a delicious and beautiful brunch for friends and family.



## **Makin' Mocktails**

Dr. Kevin Peterson, co-owner of a craft cocktail bar in Detroit, worked with Programs & Exhibits Supervisor Megan Young to create a virtual demonstration of delicious, spirit-free cocktails. Twenty-five customers attending live were guided step-by-step through two recipes: a green tea margarita and the lemonade fizz. Attendees were provided with the ingredient list ahead of the event and encouraged to make the drinks along with Kevin. This program was recorded and is now available on the library's [YouTube channel](#). It's been viewed 42 times to date.

## **Staff Highlights**

### **Welcome to the Library Profession**

Congratulations to Alex Esau as he graduated with his library degree on December 17. Alex first started as a materials assistant in 2016, then moved to the bookmobile in 2019 as a bookmobile driver, before coming into Collection Services in 2020 as an acquisition assistant.



### **Positive Interactions**

Several staff completed the training *Positive Interactions: Making the Library a Welcoming & Empowering Place for People with Disabilities*. The training from Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, a division of the American Library Association, is designed to introduce staff to communicating and interacting with people with disabilities, develop a solid understanding of the diverse types of disabilities and how they impact the way people use the library and its resources.