

Executive Director's Report May 2022

What's New @ AHML

Library garden plot at the Viatorian Giving Garden

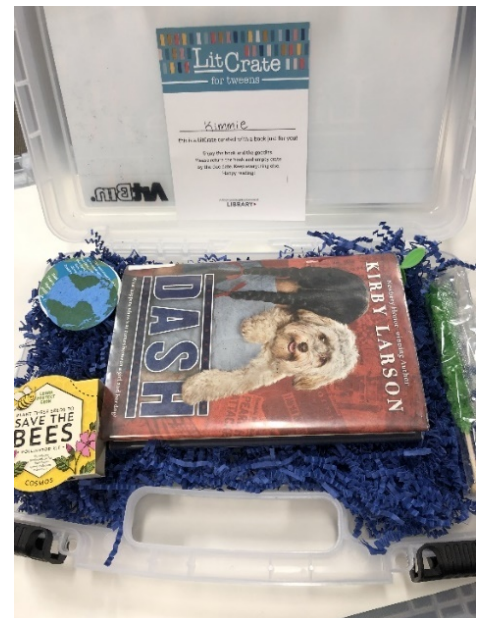


Programs and Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski attended garden training for the library's new garden plot at the Viatorian Giving Garden in Arlington Heights. Library staff and volunteers will start planting produce during the Planting Party! on June 4. The Viatorian Giving Garden is a community garden dedicated to providing fresh flowers and produce to local charitable organizations. The Garden has donated over 10,000 pounds

of vegetables to charitable organizations since its founding in 2012. With the library's summer plot, library staff and volunteers will care for the plot, harvest and donate half of the harvest back to the community via Wheeling Township Food Pantry. The remaining harvest will be used to share with community members at summer Produce Swaps, to make seasonal recipes in library culinary classes and more.

Tween LitCrates

Given the success of LitCrates for adults and teens, Youth Services staff decided to expand the curated book selection service to tweens in grades 4 – 6. Each crate contains one curated book and a few themed goodies. The goodies in the April LitCrate included a "Save the Bees" pollinator kit, green rock candy, a sprout bookmark and seed paper all in celebration of Earth Day.



Stop Sign Added

In the summer of 2021, the Village of Arlington Heights Public Works Department completed a traffic study outside of the Makerplace. This resulted in the approval of additional stop signs on Miner Street, creating a four way stop with Belmont Avenue. The stop signs were installed in April. The new crosswalk is a great addition to the neighborhood and makes traveling on foot safer for all customers.



Serving Our Community

Welcome District 214 Adult GED Spanish class

The library welcomed a group of 22 adult GED Spanish class students from District 214's Adult Education and Family Literacy Program. The last Spanish class of the season wrapped up in the library's conference rooms followed by a two-hour library tour in Spanish. Most of the students had never been to the Arlington Heights Memorial Library before and for two students this was their first experience at a public library. Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin shared library services offered at the ESL office, The Studio, The Hub and Genealogy. Students learned how to obtain a library card, how to register as reciprocal borrowers and qualifying for the Cards for Kids Act.



Makerplace District 214 Adult Outreach

Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager Chris Krueger worked with Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin at an outreach event for twenty District 214 adult ESL students at The Academy at Forest View. Catalina and Chris presented a virtual tour of the Makerplace and discussed the tools, equipment and opportunities customers could experience there.



How to Start your Business - Como Iniciar tu Negocio

Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin and Info Services Business Advisor Diane Malik collaborated on a “How to Start your Business” - “Como Iniciar tu Negocio” program in Spanish. They welcomed six attendees who were ready with questions and excited to learn how to create their business plans.

Juliette Low Elementary School Visit

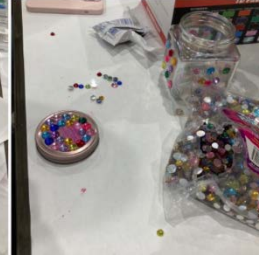
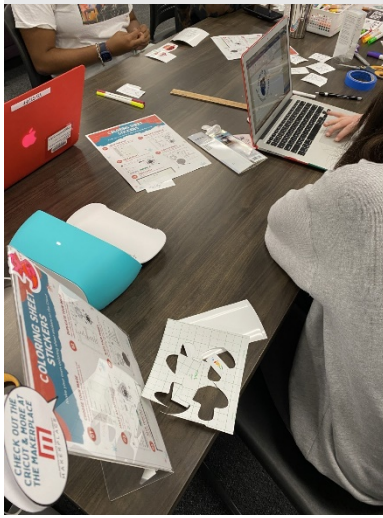
The library was invited to participate in Juliette Low Elementary’s Kindergarten Open House. Circulation staff reached 51 people during the library’s outreach visit in April and registered nine new kindergarten library cards.



Tinker Days featuring

Makerplace

For April's Tinker Days (the library's monthly outreach visits to District 214 high schools), the theme was "Be a Kid Again!" with students participating in activities that were a throwback to their elementary school days. Teen Services staff were joined by Makerspace Specialist Kate Henry on visits to Buffalo Grove High School and Rolling Meadows High School. Kate showed students how to make custom stickers using the Makerplace's hobby cutter Cricut Joy. In total, 197 teens wrote MadLibs, played games from their childhood and learned about the Makerplace.



Week of the Young Child

Sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Week of the Young Child was a wonderful opportunity to promote a variety of library activities for families with littles and culminated with the Bumps & Babies Resource Fair. A library-wide diaper drive was promoted as well, from April 4-15, to support families in the community. More than 3,000 diapers were collected and donated to District 214's Catherine M. Lee Women's and Children's Center.



Bumps & Babies Resource Fair



Youth Services Supervisor Rebecca King and Youth Services Advisor Susan Hollars welcomed over 100 attendees to the first annual Bumps & Babies Resource Fair. Eighteen businesses attended, including the Arlington Heights Police Department, childproofing services, a photography studio, doula and lactation consultants, and businesses to pamper the new mom or mom-to-be. There was a play area for caregivers and children to enjoy, a sale cart of used books from the Friends of the Library, a library table promoting a

variety of resources and services, Teen Advisory Board (TAB) volunteers to assist as needed, and every visitor received a bag of library items to help them on their parenting journey. Attending businesses also donated items as door prize giveaways.



Early Childhood Education Workshop

Lead Youth Services Outreach Specialist Laura Dakas invited an educator from the Chicago Botanic Garden to present a workshop for early educators. Sixteen teachers from area preschool and daycares enjoyed hands on plant craft activities and went home with an abundance of ideas for their classrooms.



World of Work

Circulation staff were excited to welcome students from local schools to the library on two occasions in April for the return of World of Work. Circulation staff mentored five students from Greenbrier Elementary School on April 21 and three students from Olive-Mary Stitt Elementary School on April 29. The students spent time learning tasks at the Checkout Desk, Circulation workroom and the Drive-Up window, in addition to touring the bookmobile before receiving a bag of library-themed goodies and books provided by the Friends of the Library.



Sew a Pretzel Pillow for Teens at the Makerplace

Seven eager teens joined Teen Services Supervisor Alice Son and Teen Advisor Angie Moreno in the Makerplace's sewing room to upcycle old t-shirts and fabric to create pretzel-shaped pillows. While some teens were sewing pros, many had never used a sewing machine prior to the program. All teens were successful in making a pretzel pillow with salt and all.



Earth Month Challenge

In April, Programs and Exhibits and Youth Services departments launched the library's Earth Month Challenge, inviting community members to complete ten activities to refuse, reuse, repurpose and recycle their way into eco-friendly habits. Seventy-seven customers registered and 40 completed the tasks, taking home eco-friendly prizes to continue their new habits.

Earth Month take and make kits, assembled with the help of library volunteers, were available at the Dunton Avenue entrance. Two different kits were available throughout the month – *Make Your Own Beeswax Wraps* (an earth-friendly alternative to plastic wrap!) and *Grow Your Own Three Sisters Garden* (corn, bean, and squash seeds; a kit inspired by the library's 2021 One Book, One Village book *Braiding Sweetgrass*). Three hundred and seventy kits were distributed throughout the month.

On April 5, Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker welcomed back presenter Monica Chavez with her popular *Zero-Waste Mindset*, presented to an in-person audience of 32. Monica's personable and conversational presentation included important facts (only 9% of plastic produced is recycled) and hopeful tips (doing some small things is better than doing nothing!). She handled a great volume of audience questions, including where to recycle many specialty items.

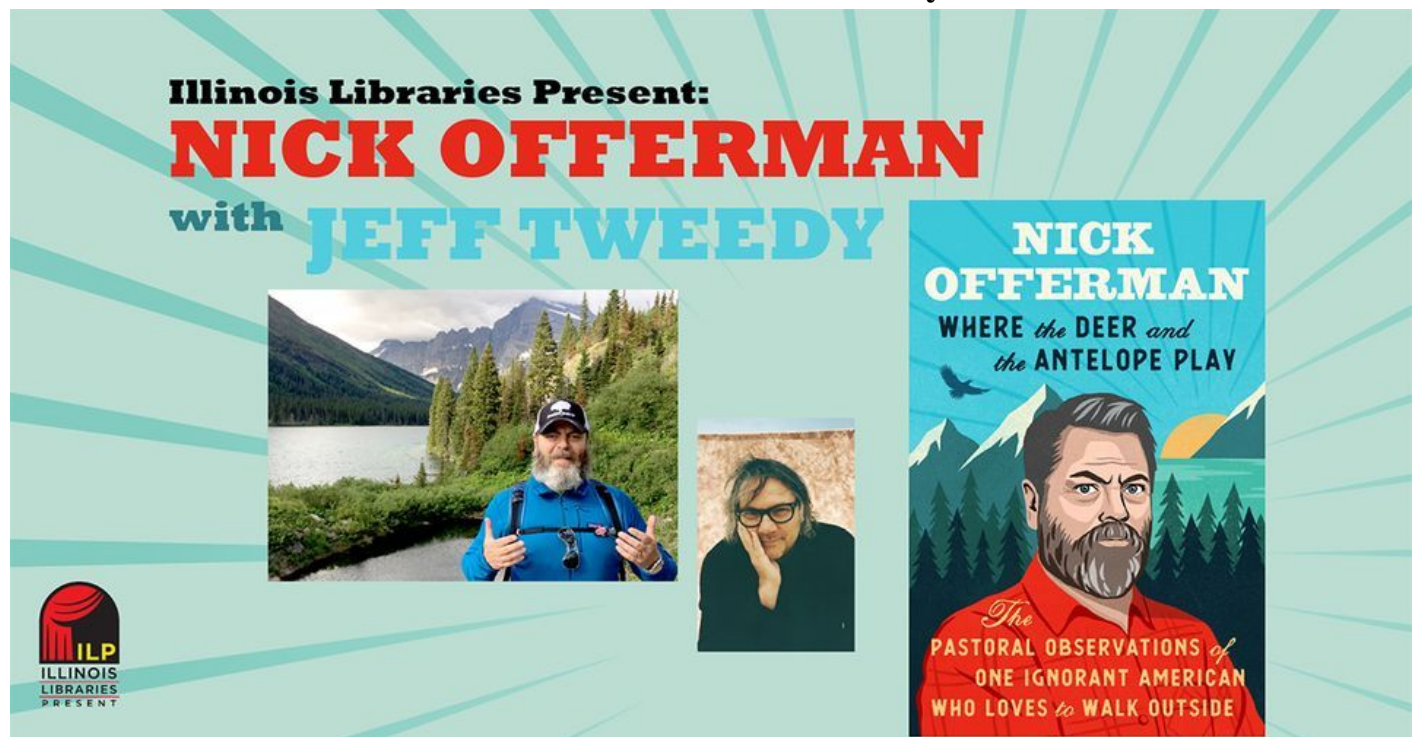
On April 12, Mary Allen from Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) returned to the library via Zoom to present *Resources Matter: Do More to Waste Less*. Forty-eight customers attended to improve their habits and learn the ins-and-outs of recycling in Arlington Heights. Please click [here](#) to view the program.

To get hands-on with Earth Month, Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski and Info Services Assistant Rachel Delaney hosted a *Terrarium Workshop* for 32 adults. Participants reused mason jars to make succulent terrariums, each personalized and decorated with cute clay figures.

Inspired by Earth Month programs, Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski curated a *Recycle Right* display near the Dunton Avenue entrance to showcase SWANCC's specialty recycling database and tips on how to 'recycle right'. A member of the Village of [Arlington Heights' Environmental Commission](#) happened upon the display and was especially happy the information was being communicated in such a prominent place.



Illinois Libraries Present: Nick Offerman and Jeff Tweedy



Programs and Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Programming Chair at Illinois Libraries Present (ILP) developed the most heavily anticipated event of the six-month ILP pilot. Beloved for their TV and film characters and Grammy-winning songwriting, respectively, actor/author Nick Offerman and musician/author Jeff Tweedy fielded questions during the hour-long conversation on Zoom. Over 600 questions were submitted by attendees. Joining the virtual audience were Lauren Offerman - Nick's sister *and* Executive Director of Three Rivers Public Library District. Almost 8,000 people registered with 5,955 attending the live virtual event. The limited-duration recording has been viewed 2,486 times to date. Arlington Heights Memorial Library drew the largest audience to the live event – 330 attendees – with a handful of ILP libraries across the state drawing more than 100 each (Bloomington, Urbana, Cook Memorial, Downers Grove, Oak Park, Northbrook, Mount Prospect and Schaumburg).

Breaking Barriers with Cards for Kids Act

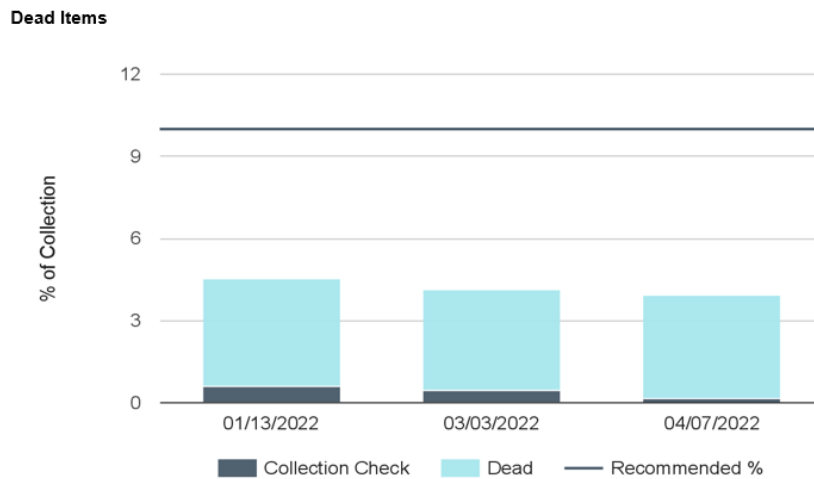
In April, a family living in unincorporated Arlington Heights learned that they qualified for library cards via the Cards for Kids Act. Upon receiving her library card, the mom immediately enrolled in ESL classes and inquired about volunteering to give back to others as well.

Vehicle Stickers

Twenty-one customers took advantage of the convenient vehicle sticker service at the Checkout Desk in April, an increase of 133% when compared to April 2021 when the service first began.

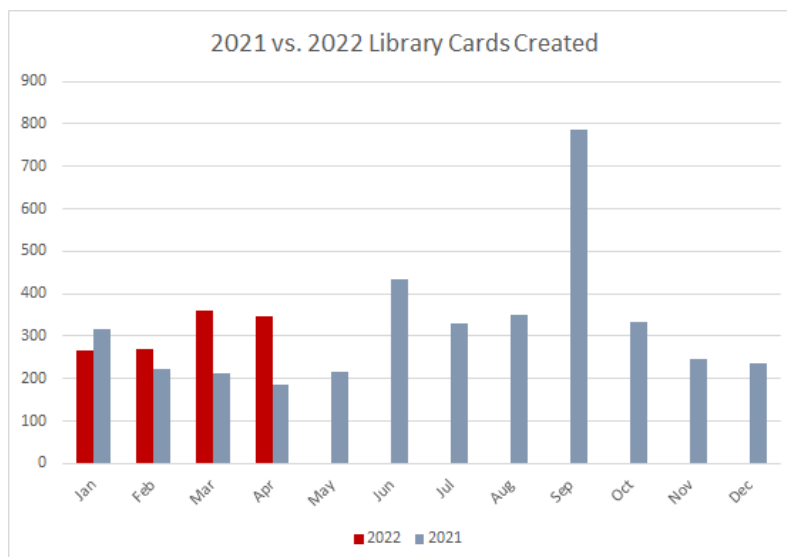
Collection Spotlight

Collection Librarians, Candy Rossin and Elis Lowery, along with Collection Supervisor Cyndi Hamann, have been working with our new collection analytics software, CollectionHQ, to evaluate items that are not circulating well and help the performance of our collection. The chart below shows items in Collection Check (dark blue), items that have not circulated in 4 years, and items that are Dead (light blue), items that have not circulated in about 2 years. Our numbers compare favorably to other similar libraries who often have dead percentages far above 10% and often closer to 20-30%. Our staff continues to learn about the new software and work to get the settings right for our collection to continue to improve our collection.



Library Cards

This month, **348 new residents signed up for library cards**. This is an **increase of 88.1%** over last April (185). This increase coincides with the fact that the library continues to see a higher number of visitors, along with a return of more outreach to schools and various local sites.



Sunday Musicale: Donna Herula Trio

Programs and Exhibits staff hosted the second Sunday Musicale of 2022 with the Donna Herula Trio. One hundred and ten customers enjoyed the trio's unique blend of folk and delta-blues. Donna did an excellent job providing back stories of the songs, sharing some history of the blues and of her resonator guitar. It was a high energy show with a lot of audience participation, and attendees enjoyed light refreshments and CD sales during a short intermission. Overall, the concert built a lot of excitement for future Sunday Musicale performances, including outdoor concerts coming this summer.



Starting Your Own Food Business

Info Services Librarian Lev Kalmens hosted *Starting Your Own Food Business* in the library's Makerplace kitchen. This panel presentation helped fifteen customers learn about local food industry regulations, working in a commercial kitchen, pricing products and building a brand.



**Senator Ann
Presents: The Great District 214 Bake-Off**

Gillespie



On April 22, the Makerplace hosted a system wide Bake-off for School District 214. The competition was the brainchild of State Senator Ann Gillespie, who represents the district’s communities, including Arlington Heights, in the Illinois General Assembly. “I like to bake, and won the Chicago Tribune

cooking contest in 2016... I’m a proponent of career and technical education programs. This event showcases those programs, highlights some of our local restaurants and highlights our new library Makerplace. I’m hoping this will be the first of an annual event.”

Programs and Exhibits Manager Jennifer Czajka and Digital Services Manager Jack Bower collaborated with the Senator’s office and the school district to bring the event together. In addition to Senator Gillespie, a panel of local restaurant industry talents judged the six student teams: television’s “Chopped” star and Scratchboard Kitchen Executive Chef Grace Goudie, Kilwins’ Confectioner Heather Henkel, Chicago Culinary Kitchen owner Kristina Gaardbo and Rep’s Place owner Mike Reppe.

The savory bread winner was an “everything bagel” babka baked by students Mayra Mendez, Samantha Rowan and Yolotzy Yanez from Elk Grove High School. Strawberry and peach scones from Rolling Meadows High School students Rachel Malik and Edgar Perez won the sweet quick bread category. The winning teams will share a \$10,000 scholarship to Harper College’s Hospitality Management program.

The Friday private event saw 70 attendees come through the Makerplace. It was an excellent showcase of its cutting-edge facilities and the way it brings community together. Click [here](#) to view event highlights.



Ninety-one soul music fans explored Sam Cooke's classic *Live at the Harlem Square Club, 1963*. Author Colin Fleming joined Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker for an in-depth and free-wheeling conversation on topics ranging from Sam Cooke as a civil rights icon, his transcendent songwriting and why the record was shelved for over 20 years. The live program was recorded and is available to view [here](#), with 185 views.

Small Business Coffee and Connect Returns

Small Business Coffee and Connect returned in April to host 15 attendees. The networking event was facilitated by Business Advisor Diane Malik and Info Services Librarian Lev Kalmens. The attendees were excited for the networking opportunity and to learn more about the library.

AARP Tax Appointments

The library provided the Hendrickson Room for the AARP Tax Help Aide volunteers to assist in preparing tax returns for **375 customers**. Over 80% of the clients served resided in Arlington Heights and neighboring suburbs (Buffalo Grove, Des Plaines, Mount Prospect, Prospect Heights and Wheeling). The average adjusted gross income of the clients served was \$35,829.

Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning Basics

Info Services Librarian Barb Powers hosted Attorney Jacob K. Ehrensaft who spoke to 78 attendees about wills, trusts, powers of attorney, probate and guardianship. The program also discussed how to select the correct person to make healthcare and financial decisions on your behalf when you cannot, as well as the importance of updating existing documents to reflect changes in the law and personal circumstances.

April Makerplace Earth Month Display

Makerspace Specialist Lee Anne Davis curated several display shelves for Earth Month at the Makerplace. Lee Anne showcased various projects using recycled or upcycled materials: a sweatshirt pet bed, an etched recycled bottle, a comb binder journal with recycled greeting cards and pieces made with stash yarn and fabric.



Questers in the Kitchen

Culinary Advisor Brian Baseggio provided a presentation about the Makerplace kitchen to the Godey Questers, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of antiques and their historical background, for a special monthly meeting. The local Questers chapter baked cookies and shared antique cookbooks with each other.



Staff Highlights

Recharge Committee Presentation – Acing the Interview

Info Services Librarian Brittany Coleman was invited to present at the Recharge Committee's April Workshop: Acing the Interview. Brittany discussed strategies and resources on preparing for different types of interviews, highlighting established skills and the soft skills hiring managers are looking for during the pre-screening process. A total of 22 attendees joined the session.

Illinois Library Association 2022 Program Proposals Accepted

Two library staff members received proposal acceptance for the Illinois Library Association's 2022 conference.

Proposal: Get a Job! Helping Teens Get (and Keep) Their First Gig

Staff: Material Handling Supervisor Matt Williams, Youth Services Supervisor Alice Son and Info Services Librarian Brittany Coleman

Proposal: Connecting with the growing ELL (English Language Learner) learners' community through different library program models.

Staff: ESL/Literacy Services Coordinator Tracy Karim, Literacy Librarian Jean Demas from Lisle Public Library and Community Engagement Librarian Katrina Belogorsky from Skokie Public Library